V. I. LENIN

SELECTED WORKS

TWO-VOLUME EDITION

V. I. LENIN

SELECTED WORKS

IN TWO VOLUMES



Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CONTENTS

THE PERIOD OF FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION AND CIVIL WAR

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO THE PEACEFUL WORK OF ECONOMIC RESTORATION

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO THE PEACEFUL WORK OF ECONOMIC RESTORATION



V. I. LENIN

THE PERIOD OF PREPARATION AND REALIZATION OF THE OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE PRESENT REVOLUTION

I arrived in Petrograd only on the night of April 3, and I could therefore, of course, deliver a report at the meeting on April 4 on the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat only upon my own responsibility, and with reservations as to insufficient preparation.

The only thing I could do to facilitate matters for myself and for *honest* opponents was to prepare *written* theses. I read them, and gave the text to Comrade Tsereteli. I read them very slowly, *twice*: first at a meeting of Bolsheviks and then at a meeting of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

I publish these personal theses with only the briefest explanatory comments, which were developed in far greater detail in the report.

THESES

1. In our attitude towards the war, which also under the new government of Lvov and Co. unquestionably remains on Russia's part a predatory imperialist war owing to the capitalist nature of that government, not the slightest concession must be made to "revolutionary defencism."

The class-conscious proletariat could consent to a revolutionary war, which would really justify revolutionary defencism, only on condition: a) that the power of government pass to the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasantry bordering on the proletariat; b) that all annexations be renounced in deed and not only in word; c) that a complete and real break be made with all capitalist interests.

In view of the undoubted honesty of the broad strata of the mass believers in revolutionary defencism, who accept the war as a necessity only, and not as a means of conquest, in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary very thoroughly, persistently and patiently to explain their error to them, to explain the inseparable connection between capital and the imperialist war, and to prove that *it is impossible* to end the war by a truly democratic, non-coercive peace without the overthrow of capital.

The most widespread propaganda of this view among the army on active service must be organized.

Fraternization

2 The specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution—which, owing to the insufficient class consciousness and organization of the proletariat placed the power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—*to the second* stage, which must place the power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry

This transition is characterized, on the one hand, by a maximum of freedom (Russia is *now* the freest of all the belligerent countries in the world), on the other, by the absence of violence in relation to the masses and, finally, by the unreasoning confidence of the masses in the government of capitalists, the worst enemies of peace and Socialism

This specific situation demands of us an ability to adapt ourselves to the *specific* requirements of Party work among unprecedentedly large masses of proletarians who have just awakened to political life

3 No support must be given to the Provisional Government, the utter falsity of all its promises must be explained, particularly those relating to the renunciation of annexations Exposure, and not the unpardonable illusion breeding "demand" that *this* government, a government of capitalists, should *cease* to be an imperialist government

4 The fact must be recognized that in most of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies our Party is in a minority, and so far in a small minority, as against *a bloc of all* the petty bourgeois opportunist elements, who have yielded to the influence of the bourgeoisie and convey its influence to the proletariat, from the Popular Socialists and the Socialist-Revolutionaries down to the Organization Committee* (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, etc), Steklov, etc , etc

It must be explained to the masses that the Soviets of Workers' Deputies are the *only possible form of revolutionary government*, and that therefore our task is, as long as *this* government yields to the influence of the bourgeoisie, to present a patient, systematic, and persistent *explanation* of the errors of their tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses

As long as we are in the minority we carry on the work of criticizing and explaining errors and at the same time we preach the necessity of transferring the entire power of state to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, so that the masses may by experience overcome their mistakes

5 Not a parliamentary republic—to return to a parliamentary republic from the Soviets of Workers' Deputies would be a retrograde step—but a republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country, from top to bottom

Abolition of the police, he army and the bureaucracy **

---

* The Organization Committee—leading organ of the Mensheviks —*Ed.*

** *I e*, the standing army to be replaced by the universally armed people

The salaries of all officials, who are to be elected and to be subject to recall at any time, not to exceed the average wage of a competent worker.

6. In the agrarian program the emphasis must be laid on the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies.

Confiscation of all landed estates.

Nationalization of *all* lands in the country, the disposal of the land to be put in the charge of the local Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies. The organization of separate Soviets of Deputies of Poor Peasants. The creation of model farms on each of the large estates (varying from 100 to 300 dessiatins, in accordance with local and other conditions, at the discretion of the local institutions) under the control of the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and for the public account.

7. The immediate amalgamation of all banks in the country into a single national bank, control over which shall be exercised by the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

8. Our *immediate* task is not to "introduce" Socialism, but only to bring social production and distribution of products at once under the *control* of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

9. Party tasks:

- a) Immediate summoning of a Party congress;
- b) Alteration of the Party program, mainly:
  1) On the question of imperialism and the imperialist war;
  2) On the question of our attitude towards the state and *our* demand for a "commune state";*
  3) Amendment of our antiquated minimum program.
- c) A new name for the Party.**

10. A new International.

We must take the initiative in creating a revolutionary International, an International directed against the *social-chauvinists* and against the "Centre." ***

In order that the reader may understand what induced me to emphasize as a rare exception, the "case" of honest opponents, I invite him to compare the above theses with the following objection of Mr. Goldenberg:

---

* *I. e.*, a state of which the Paris Commune was the prototype.

** Instead of "Social-Democrats," whose official leaders *throughout* the world have betrayed Socialism by deserting to the bourgeoisie (the "defencists" and the vacillating "Kautskyites"), we must call ourselves a *Communist Party*.

*** The "Centre" in the international Social-Democratic movement is the trend which vacillates between the chauvinists ("=defencists") and internationalists, *i. e.*, Kautsky and Co. in Germany, Longuet and Co. in France, Chkheidze and Co. in Russia, Turati and Co. in Italy, MacDonald and Co. in England, etc.

Lenin, he said, "has planted the banner of civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy" (quoted in No 5 of Mr. Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo**).

A gem, is it not?

I write, announce and elaborately explain: "In view of the undoubted honesty of the *broad* strata of the *mass* believers in revolutionary defencism . . . in view of the fact that they are being deceived by the bourgeoisie, *it is necessary very thoroughly, persistently* and *patiently* to explain their error to them. . . ."

Yet the bourgeois gentlemen who call themselves Social-Democrats, who *do not* belong either to the *broad* strata or to the *mass* of believers in defencism, have the effrontery to present my views thus. "The banner [!] of civil war [of which there is not a word in the theses and not a word in my speech!] has been planted [!] in the midst [!!] of revolutionary democracy. . ."

What does this mean? In what way does this differ from pogrom agitation, from the *Russkaya Volya*?**

I write, announce and elaborately explain "The Soviets of Workers' Deputies are the *only possible* form of revolutionary government, and therefore our task is to present a patient, systematic, and persistent *explanation* of the errors of their tactics, an explanation especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses."

Yet opponents of a certain type present my views as a call to "civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy"!!

I attacked the Provisional Government for *not* having appointed an early date, or any date at all, for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly and for confining itself to promises. I argued that *without* the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is not guaranteed and its success is impossible.

And the view is attributed to me that I am opposed to the earliest convocation of the Constituent Assembly!!!

I would call this "raving," had not decades of political struggle taught me to regard honesty in opponents as a rare exception.

Mr. Plekhanov in his paper called my speech "raving." Very good Mr. Plekhanov! But see how awkward, uncouth, and slow-witted you are in your polemics. If I delivered a raving speech for two hours, how is it that an audience of hundreds tolerated this "raving"? Further, why does your paper devote a whole column to an account of the "raving"? Clumsy, very clumsy!

---

* *Yedinstvo* (*Unity*)—a newspaper published by G V. Plekhanov in Petrograd in 1917. It pursued an ultra chauvinist policy, conducted a frenzied campaign against the Bolsheviks and advocated a coalition with the party of the liberal monarchist bourgeoisie—the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets) —*Ed.*

** *Russkaya Volya* (*Russian Will*)—a yellow daily newspaper published in Petrograd in 1916 It conducted a slanderous campaign against the Bolsheviks It was suppressed after the October Revolution in 1917 —*Ed.*

It is, of course, much easier to shout, scold, and howl than to attempt to relate, to explain, to recall *what* Marx and Engels said in 1871, 1872 and 1875 about the experience of the Paris Commune and the *kind* of state the proletariat needs.

Mr. Plekhanov, the former Marxist, presumably does not care to recall Marxism.

I quoted the words of Rosa Luxemburg, who on August 4, 1914, called *German* Social-Democracy a "stinking corpse." And Messrs. Plekhanovs, Goldenbergs and Co, are "offended." On whose account? On account of the *German* chauvinists, because they were called chauvinists!

They have got into a muddle, these poor Russian social-chauvinists—Socialists in word and chauvinists in action.

Published in *Pravda* No. 26,
April 20 [7], 1917

A DUAL POWER

The basic question in any revolution is that of state power. Unless this question is understood, there can be no intelligent participation in the revolution, let alone guidance of the revolution.

The striking feature of our revolution is that it has established a *dual power*. This fact must be grasped first and foremost; unless it is understood, we cannot advance. We must know how to supplement and amend old "formulas," for example, of Bolshevism, for as it has been proved, they were sound in general, but their concrete realization has *turned out to be* different. *Nobody* hitherto thought, or could have thought, of a dual power.

In what does this dual power consist? In the fact that side by side ith the Provisional Government, the government of the *bourgeoisie*, iere has developed *another government*, weak and embryonic as yet, it undoubtedly an actually existing and growing government—the iviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

What is the class composition of this other government? It consists the proletariat and the peasantry (clad in soldier's uniform). What the political character of this government? It is a revolutionary dictarship, *i. e.*, a power directly based on revolutionary usurpation, on the rect initiative of the masses from below, and *not on a law* enacted by a ntralized government. It is a power entirely different from that generally to be found in the parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republics of the usual type still prevailing in the advanced countries of Europe and America. This circumstance is often forgotten, often not reflected on, yet it is the crux of the matter. This power is of exactly *the same type* as the Paris Commune of 1871. The fundamental characteristics of this type are: 1) the source of power is not a law previously discussed and enacted by parliament, but the direct initiative of the masses from below, in their localities—outright "usurpation," to use a current expression; 2) the direct arming of the whole people in place of the police and the army, which are institutions separated from the people and opposed to the people; order in the state under such a power is maintained by the armed workers and peasants *themselves*, by the armed people *itself*; 3) officials and bureaucrats are either replaced by the direct rule of the people itself or at least placed under special control; they not only become

elected officials, but are also *subject to recall* at the first demand of the people; they are reduced to the position of simple agents; from a privileged stratum occupying "posts" remunerated on a high-bourgeois scale, they become workers of a special "branch," remunerated at a salary *not exceeding* the ordinary pay of a competent worker.

This, and this *alone*, constitutes the *essence* of the Paris Commune as a specific type of state. This essence was forgotten or perverted by the Plekhanovs (out-and-out chauvinists who have betrayed Marxism), the Kautskys (the people of the "Centre," *i.e.*, those who vacillate between chauvinism and Marxism), and generally by all those Social-Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., etc., who are now in control.

They confine themselves to phrases, evasions, subterfuges; they congratulate each other a thousand times upon the revolution, but they refuse to *ponder* over *what* the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies *are*. They refuse to recognize the obvious truth that inasmuch as the Soviets exist, *inasmuch as* they are a power, we have in Russia a state of the *type* of the Paris Commune.

I have underscored the words *inasmuch as*, for it is only an incipient power. By direct agreement with the bourgeois Provisional Government and by a series of actual concessions, it has itself *surrendered and is surrendering* its positions to the bourgeoisie.

Why? Is it because Chkheidze, Tsereteli, Steklov, and Co. are making a "mistake"? Nonsense. Only a philistine can think so—not a Marxist. The reason is *inadequate class-consciousness* and organization among the proletarians and peasants. The "mistake" of the leaders mentioned lies in their petty-bourgeois position, in the fact that instead of clarifying the minds of the workers, they are *befogging* them; instead of dispersing petty-bourgeois illusions, they are *instilling* them; instead of freeing the masses from bourgeois influence, they are *strengthening* that influence.

It should be clear from this why our comrades too are so mistaken in putting the question "simply": should the Provisional Government be overthrown immediately?

My answer is: 1) it should be overthrown, for it is an oligarchical, bourgeois, and not a people's government, and *cannot* provide peace, nor bread, nor full freedom; 2) it cannot be overthrown just now, for it is being maintained by a direct and indirect, a formal and actual *agreement* with the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and particularly with the chief Soviet, the Petrograd Soviet; 3) generally, it cannot be "overthrown" by any ordinary method, for it rests on the "*support*" given to the bourgeoisie by the *second* government—the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and that government is the only possible revolutionary government, which directly expresses the mind and will of the majority of the workers and peasants. Humanity has not yet evolved and we do not as yet know a type of government superior to and better than the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies.

In order to become a power the class-conscious workers must win the majority to their side. *As long as* no violence is used against the masses there is no other road to power. We are not Blanquists,* we do not stand for the seizure of power by a minority. We are Marxists, we stand for proletarian class struggle against petty-bourgeois intoxication, against chauvinist defencism, phrasemongering and dependence on the bourgeoisie.

Let us create a proletarian Communist Party; its elements have already been created by the best adherents of Bolshevism; let us rally our ranks for proletarian class work; then, from among the proletarians, from among the *poorest* peasants, ever greater numbers will range themselves on our side. For *actual experience* will from day to day shatter the petty-bourgeois illusions of the "Social-Democrats"—the Chkheidzes, Tseretelis, Steklovs, and the rest—of the "Socialist-Revolutionaries," petty-bourgeois of a still purer water, and so on and so forth.

The bourgeoisie stands for the undivided power of the bourgeoisie.

The class-conscious workers stand for the undivided power of the Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies—for undivided power made possible not by dubious ventures, but by the *enlightenment* of the proletarian consciousness, by its *emancipation* from the influence of the bourgeoisie.

The petty-bourgeoisie—"Social-Democrats," Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., etc.—vacillates and *hinders* this enlightenment and emancipation.

Such is the actual, the *class* alignment of forces that determines our tasks.

Published in *Pravda* № 28,
April 22 [9], 1917

* *Blanquists*—followers of the well-known French revolutionary Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881). In the words of Lenin the Blanquists hoped to "free humanity from wage slavery not by means of the class struggle of the proletariat but by means of a conspiracy of a select intellectual minority."—*Ed.*

THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN OUR REVOLUTION

Draft of a Platform for the Proletarian Party

The historical moment through which Russia is now passing is marked by the following main characteristics:

THE CLASS CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTION

1. The old tsarist power, representing only a handful of feudal landlords who commanded the entire machinery of the state (the army, the police and the bureaucracy), has been smashed and set aside, but not utterly destroyed. Formally, the monarchy has not been abolished. The Romanov gang continues to hatch monarchist intrigues. The vast landed possessions of the feudal landlords have not been abolished.

2. The state power in Russia has passed into the hands of a new *class*, namely, the bourgeoisie and landlords who had become bourgeois. *To that extent* the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia has been completed.

Having come to power, the bourgeoisie has formed a bloc with the openly monarchist elements, who are notorious for their exceptionally ardent support of Nicholas the Bloody* and Stolypin the Hangman** in 1906-14 (Guchkov and other politicians to the Right of the Cadets). The new bourgeois government of Lvov and Co. has attempted and has begun to negotiate with the Romanovs for the restoration of the monarchy in Russia. While making a noisy play of revolutionary phrases, this government is appointing partisans of the old regime to positions of authority. It is striving to reform the machinery of state (the army, the police and the

* *Nicholas the Bloody* (1868-1918)—Nicholas Romanov, the last Russian tsar; deposed as a result of the February revolution in 1917.—*Ed.*

** *Stolypin the Hangman*—P. A. Stolypin (1862-1911), Minister of the Interior and Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Notorious for the suppression of the first Russian revolution (1905-07) and for the subsequent period of ruthless political reaction ("Stolypin reaction" or "Stolypinism"). Nicknamed "the Hangman" for his brutal reprisals against the workers and peasants.—*Ed.*

bureaucracy) as little as possible, and has turned it over to the bourgeoisie. The new government has already begun in every way to hinder the revolutionary initiative of mass action and the seizure of power by the people *from below*, which is the *sole* guarantee of any real success of the revolution.

This government has not even fixed a date for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. It is not laying a finger on the landed estates, the material foundation of feudal tsarism. This government does not even contemplate starting an investigation and making public the activities of the monopolistic financial concerns, such as the big banks, the syndicates and cartels of the capitalists, etc., or instituting control over them.

The chief, the decisive Ministerial posts in the new government (the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of War, *i.e.*, the command over the army, the police, the bureaucracy and the entire apparatus for the oppression of the masses) are filled by notorious monarchists and supporters of agrarian landlordism. The Cadets, those day-old republicans, those involuntary republicans, have been assigned posts of secondary importance, having no direct relation to the *command* over the people or to the apparatus of state power. A. Kerensky, a Trudovik, an "also-Socialist," has no function whatsoever, except to lull the vigilance and attention of the people with sonorous phrases.

For all these reasons, the new bourgeois government does not deserve the confidence of the proletariat even in the sphere of internal policy, and no support of that government by the proletariat is admissible.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

3. In the domain of foreign policy, which has been brought to the forefront by objective circumstances, the new government stands for the continuation of the imperialist war, a war waged in concert with the imperialist powers—Great Britain, France, and others—for the division of the capitalist spoils and for the strangling of small and weak nations.

Subordinated to the interests of Russian capital and of its powerful protector and *master*, Anglo-French imperialist capital, the wealthiest in the world, the new government, notwithstanding the wishes expressed in the most definite fashion on behalf of the undoubted majority of the peoples of Russia through the Soviets of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, has taken no real steps to put a stop to the slaughter of nations in the interests of the capitalists. It has not even published the secret treaties of a frankly predatory character (for the partition of Persia, the spoliation of China, the spoliation of Turkey, the partition of Austria, the annexation of Eastern Prussia, the annexation of the German colonies, etc.), which, as everybody knows, bind Russia to Anglo-French predatory imperialist capital. It has *confirmed* these treaties concluded by tsarism,

which for centuries robbed and oppressed more nations than other tyrants and despots, and which not only oppressed, but also disgraced and debauched the Great-Russian nation by transforming it into an executioner of other nations.

The new government has confirmed these shameful cut-throat treaties and has not proposed an immediate armistice to all the belligerent nations, in spite of the clearly expressed demand of the majority of the people of Russia, voiced through the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. It has evaded the issue with the help of solemn, sonorous, ceremonious, but absolutely empty declarations and phrases, such as in the mouths of bourgeois diplomats have always served, and still serve, to deceive the trustful and naive masses of the oppressed people.

4. Hence, not only is the new government not worthy of the slightest confidence in the field of foreign policy, but to go on demanding that it should make known the will for peace of the peoples of Russia, that it should renounce annexations, and so on and so forth, is in practice to deceive the people, to inspire them with false hopes, to retard their mental enlightenment, indirectly to reconcile them to the continuation of a war the true social character of which is determined not by good intentions, but by the class character of the government that wages the war, by the connection between the class represented by this government and the imperialist finance capital of Russia, Great Britain, France, etc., *by the real and actual policy* which that class is pursuing.

A PECULIAR DUAL POWER AND ITS CLASS SIGNIFICANCE

5. The main peculiarity of our revolution, a peculiarity that most urgently demands thoughtful attention, is the *dual power* which was established in the very first days after the triumph of the revolution.

This dual power is manifested in the existence of *two* governments: one is the main, the real, the actual government of the bourgeoisie, the "Provisional Government" of Lvov and Co., which controls all the organs of power; the other is a supplementary and parallel government, a "supervisory" government in the shape of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which possesses no organs of state power, but which directly derives its authority from a clear and indisputable majority of the people, from the armed workers and soldiers.

The class origin and the class significance of this dual power consist in the fact that the Russian revolution of March 1917 not only swept away the whole tsarist monarchy, not only transferred the entire power to the bourgeoisie, but also *approached very closely* to the point of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. The Petrograd and the other, the local, Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies represent precisely such a dictatorship (that is, a government

power resting not on law but on the direct force of armed masses of th population), a dictatorship precisely of the above mentioned classes

6 The second peculiarity of the Russian revolution, a highly impor tant one, is the circumstance that the Petrograd Soviet of Soldiers' an Workers' Deputies, which, as everything goes to show, enjoys the con fidence of most of the local Soviets, is *voluntarily* transferring the powe of the state to the bourgeoisie and *its* Provisional Government, is vol untarily *ceding* the supremacy to the latter, and, having entered into an agreement to support it, is limiting its own function to that of an ob server, a supervisor of the convocation of the *Constituent Assembly* (the date of which has not even been announced as yet by the Provisional Government)

This extremely peculiar circumstance, unparalleled in history in such a form, has led to the *interlocking of two* dictatorships the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (for the Provisional Government of Lvov and Co is a dictatorship, *i e*, a power based not on law, not on the previously ex pressed will of the people, but on seizure by force, accomplished by a defi nite class, namely, the bourgeoisie) and the dictatorship of the proleta riat and peasantry (the Soviet of Workers and Soldiers' Deputies)

There is not the slightest doubt that such an "interlocking" *cannot* last long Two powers *cannot* exist in a state One of them is bound to be eliminated, and the entire Russian bourgeoisie is already straining every nerve, is everywhere striving in every possible way to remove and enfeeble the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, to eliminate them, and to establish the sole power of the bourgeoisie

The dual power expresses but a *transitional* phase in the development of the revolution, in which it has gone farther than the ordinary bourgeois democratic revolution, but *has not yet reached* a "pure" dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry

The class significance (and class explanation) of this transitional and unstable situation is as follows like all revolutions, our revolution, in the struggle *against* tsarism, demanded the greatest heroism and self sacrifice on the part of the masses and moreover immediately *drew* un precedentedly vast numbers of ordinary citizens *into the movement*

From the point of view of science and practical politics, one of the chief symptoms of *every* real revolution is the unusually rapid, sudden, and abrupt increase *in the number of "ordinary citizens"* who begin to participate actively, independently and effectively in political life and in *the organization of the state*

Such *is* the case in Russia Russia at present is seething Millions and tens of millions of people who had been politically dormant for ten years and politically crushed by the terrible oppression of tsarism and by in human toil for the landlords and manufacturers *have awakened and been drawn into politics* Who are these millions and tens of millions? For the most part small proprietors, petty bourgeois, people midway between

the capitalists and the wage workers. Russia is the most petty-bourgeois of European countries.

A gigantic petty-bourgeois wave has swept over everything and overwhelmed the class-conscious proletariat, not only by force of numbers but also ideologically; that is, it has infected and imbued very wide circles of workers with the petty-bourgeois political outlook.

The petty-bourgeois are in reality dependent upon the bourgeoisie, for they live like masters and not like proletarians (from the point of view of their *place* in social *production*), and follow the bourgeoisie in their way of thinking.

An attitude of naive trust in the capitalists—the worst foes of peace and Socialism—characterizes the politics of the Russian *masses* at the present moment; such is the fruit that has *grown* with revolutionary rapidity on the social and economic soil of the most petty-bourgeois of European countries. That is the *class* basis for the "*agreement*" between the Provisional Government and the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (I must emphasize that I am referring not so much to a formal agreement as to *actual* support, a tacit agreement, a naively trustful surrender of power), an agreement which has presented the Guchkovs with a choice morsel—real power—and the Soviet with promises and honours (for the time being), with flattery, phrases, assurances, and the bowings and scrapings of the Kerenskys.

The reverse side of the medal is the inadequate numerical strength of the proletariat in Russia and its insufficient class-consciousness and organization.

All the Narodnik parties, including the Socialist-Revolutionaries, have always been petty-bourgeois. This is also true of the party of the Organization Committee (Chkheidze, Tsereteli, etc.). The independent revolutionaries (Steklov and others) have similarly drifted with the tide, or have not yet coped with it.

THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF THE TACTICS WHICH FOLLOW FROM THE ABOVE

7. For the Marxist, who must reckon with objective facts, with the masses and classes, rather than with individuals and so on, the specific nature of the actual situation as described above must determine the specific tactics of the *present* moment.

The specific character of these tactics calls for the "pouring of vinegar and bile into the sweet water of revolutionary-democratic eloquence" (as my fellow-member on the Central Committee of our Party, Teodorovich, so aptly expressed it at yesterday's session of the All-Russian Congress of Railwaymen in Petrograd). Our work must be one of criticism, of *explaining* the mistakes of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary

and Social Democratic parties, of preparing and welding the elements of a *class conscious* proletarian, Communist party, and of *releasing* the proletariat from the "general" petty bourgeois enchantment.

This *may appear* to be "nothing more" than propaganda work, but in reality it is extremely *practical revolutionary* work, for there *is no* advance for a revolution that has come to a standstill, that has choked itself with phrases, and that keeps "marking time," *not because* of external obstacles, *not because of the violence* of the bourgeoisie (Guchkov is still only threatening to employ violence against the soldier masses), but *because* of the naive trust of the masses

Only by combating this naive trust (and one can combat it only ideologically, by comradely persuasion, by pointing to the *lessons of experience*) can we escape the *prevailing orgy of revolutionary phrasemongering* and make real progress in stimulating the class consciousness both of the proletariat and of the masses in general, as well as in stimulating their bold and determined initiative *in the localities*—the arbitrary realization, development and consolidation of liberties, democracy, and the principle of the national ownership of all the land

8 The world wide experience of bourgeois and landlord governments has developed *two* methods of keeping the people in subjection The first is violence Nicholas Romanov I, called Nicholas Palkin,* and Nicholas II, the Bloody, demonstrated to the Russian people the maximum of what can and cannot be done by this hangman's method But there is another method, best developed by the English and French bourgeoisie, who "learnt their lesson" in a series of great revolutions and revolutionary movements of the masses *That is the method of deception, flattery, fine phrases,* numberless promises, petty sops, and concessions of the unessential while retaining the essential

The specific feature of the present moment in Russia is a dizzy transition from the first method to the second, from violent oppression of the people to *flattering* and deceiving the people by false promises Vaska the cat listens, but goes on eating ** Milyukov and Guchkov hold power, they are protecting the profits of capital and conducting an imperialist war in the interests of Russian and Anglo French capital, and try to get away with promises, declamations and impressive statements when replying to the speeches of "cooks" like Chkheidze, Tsereteli and Steklov, who threaten, exhort, conjure, beseech, demand and proclaim. . Vaska the cat listens, but goes on eating .

---

* *Nicholas Palkin*—Nicholas Romanov I (1796 1855), Russian tsar The nick name "Palkin" is derived from the Russian word *palka* meaning stick, club —*Ed*

** From the fable by the celebrated Russian fabulist I A Krylov "The Cat and the Cook" in which Vaska the cat is left by the cook to guard the pantry and keep the mice away On the cook's return he finds the cat gobbling down a fowl The cook reads the cat a long lecture on the impropriety of his conduct The cat listens to the lecture, but goes on eating unperturbed —*Ed*

But from day to day trustful naiveté and naive trust will diminish especially among the proletarians and *poor* peasants, who are being taugh by experience (by their social and economic position) to distrust the capi talists.

The leaders of the petty bourgeoisie "must" teach the people to trus the bourgeoisie. The proletarians must teach the people to distrust th bourgeoisie.

REVOLUTIONARY DEFENCISM AND ITS CLASS SIGNIFICANCE

9. *Revolutionary defencism* must be regarded as the most importan and striking manifestation of the petty-bourgeois wave that has over whelmed "nearly everything." There can be no greater enemy to th progress and success of the Russian revolution.

Those who have yielded on this point and are unable to extricate them selves are lost to the revolution. But the masses yield in a different wa from the leaders; and they extricate themselves *differently*, by a differ ent course of development, by different means.

Revolutionary defencism is, on the one hand, a result of the deceptio practised on the masses by the bourgeoisie, a result of the naive trus of the peasants and a section of the workers; it is, on the other, an expres sion of the interests and standpoint of the small master, who is to som extent interested in annexations and bank profits, and who "religiously" guards the traditions of tsarism, which demoralized the Great Russian by making them do a hangman's work among the other nations.

The bourgeoisie deceives the people by playing upon the noble prid of the revolution and by pretending that the *social and political* characte of the war, as far as Russia is concerned, underwent a change with thi stage of the revolution, with the substitution of the bourgeois near-repub lic of Guchkov and Milyukov for the tsarist monarchy. And the peopl believe it—for the time being—largely owing to old-time prejudices by virtue of which they regard the other peoples of Russia, *i.e.*, the non Great Russians, almost as the property and patrimony of the Great Rus sians. This vile demoralization of the Great-Russian people by th tsarist government, which taught them to regard the other peoples a something inferior, something belonging "by right" to Great Russia could not be cured *instantly*.

What is required of us is the *ability* to explain to the masses that th social and political character of the war is determined not by the "goo intentions" of individuals or groups, or even of nations, but by the posi tion of the *class* which conducts the war, by the class *policy* of which th war is a continuation, by the *ties* of capital, which is the dominant eco nomic force in modern society, by the *imperialist character* of internationa capital, by Russia's dependence in finance, banking and diplomacy upo

Great Britain, France, etc To explain this to the masses skilfully and in a comprehensible way *is not easy*, none of us could do it at once without committing errors

But such, and only such, must be the direction or, rather, the contents of our propaganda The slightest concession to revolutionary defencism *is treason to Socialism* and a complete renunciation of *internationalism*, no matter by what fine phrases and "practical" considerations it is justified

The slogan "Down with the war!" is, of course, a correct one But it fails to take into account the specific nature of the tasks of the present moment and of the necessity of approaching the masses *in a different way* It is, in my opinion, similar to the slogan "Down with the tsar!" with which the inexperienced agitator of the "good old days" went simply and directly to the country districts—and received a beating The rank and-file supporters of revolutionary defencism are *sincere*, not in the personal, but in the class sense, *i e* , they belong to *classes* (workers and poor peasants) which *in actual fact* have nothing to gain from annexations and the strangulation of other peoples Their position is different from that of the bourgeois and the "intellectual" gentry, who know very well that *it is impossible* to renounce annexations without renouncing the rule of capital, and who unscrupulously deceive the masses with fine phrases, with unlimited promises and endless assurances

The rank and file believer in defencism regards the matter in a simple, matter of fact way "I don't want annexations, but the German is 'pitching' into *me* therefore I'm defending a just cause and not any kind of imperialist interests at all " It must be explained very patiently to a man like this that it is not a question of his personal wishes, but of mass, *class*, political relations and conditions, of the connection between the war and the interests of capital and the international network of banks, and so forth Only such a struggle against defencism will be serious and promising of success—perhaps not a very rapid success, but one that will be real and durable.

HOW CAN THE WAR BE ENDED?

10 The war cannot be ended "at will " It cannot be ended by the decision of one of the warring parties It cannot be ended by "sticking your bayonet in the ground," as one soldier, a defencist, expressed it

The war cannot be ended by an "agreement" between the Socialists of the various countries, by the "action" of the proletarians of all countries, by the "will" of the peoples, and so forth Phrases of this kind, which fill the articles of the defencist and semi defencist semi internationalist papers and innumerable resolutions, appeals, manifestos, and the resolutions of the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, are nothing but the empty, innocent and pious wishes of the petty bourgeois Noth

ing is more pernicious than such phrases as "ascertaining the will of the peoples for peace," as the *sequence* of revolutionary action of the proletariat (after the Russian proletariat comes the "turn" of the German), etc. All this is in the spirit of Louis Blanc,* daydreaming, a game of "political campaigning," and in reality but a repetition of the fable of Vaska the cat.

The war is not a product of the evil will of rapacious capitalists although it is undoubtedly being fought *only* in their interests and they alone are being enriched by it. The war is a product of half a century of development of world capital and of its billions of threads and connections. It is *impossible* to escape from the imperialist war at a bound, it is *impossible* to achieve a democratic, non-oppressive peace without the overthrow of the power of capital and the transfer of state power to *another* class, the proletariat.

The Russian revolution of February-March 1917 was the beginning of the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war. This revolution took the first step towards ending the war: but it requires a *second* step, namely, the transfer of the power of state to the proletariat, to make the end of the war a *certainty*. This will be the beginning of a "breach in the front" on a world-wide scale, a breach in the front of the interests of capital; and only after having broken *this* front *can* the proletariat save mankind from the horrors of war and endow it with the blessings of a durable peace.

To such a "breach in the front" of capital the Russian revolution has *already* brought the Russian proletariat by creating the Soviets of Workers' Deputies.

THE NEW TYPE OF STATE DEVELOPING IN OUR REVOLUTION

11. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies are not understood; not only in the sense that their class character, their part in the *Russian* revolution, is not clear to the majority, but also in the sense that they constitute a new form, or rather a new *type of state*.

The most perfect and advanced type of bourgeois state is the *parliamentary democratic republic*: power is vested in parliament; the state machine, the apparatus and organ of administration, is of the customary kind: a standing army, a police and a bureaucracy—which in practice is permanent and privileged and stands *above* the people.

But since the end of the nineteenth century, revolutionary epochs

* "*In the spirit of Louis Blanc*"—Louis Blanc (1811-1882), French petty-bourgeois Socialist. Lenin implies by this term the policy of deserting the class positions of the proletariat, pursuing a policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the harbouring of petty-bourgeois illusions, and impotent desires in lieu of an irreconcilable struggle against the class enemy.—*Ed.*

have been producing a *higher* type of democratic state, a state which in certain respects, as Engels put it,* ceases to be a state, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word." This state is of the type of the Paris Commune, one in which a *standing army and police* severed from the people are *replaced* by the directly armed people themselves. *This feature* constituted the very essence of the Commune, which had been so maligned and slandered by the bourgeois writers, and to which has been erroneously ascribed, among other things, the intention of immediately "introducing" Socialism.

This is the type of state which the Russian revolution *began* to create in 1905 and in 1917. A republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies, *united in an All-Russian Constituent Assembly* of people's representatives or in a Council of Soviets, etc., is what is *already being realized* in our country now, at this juncture, by the initiative of millions of people who, of their own accord, are creating a democracy *in their own way*, without waiting until the Cadet professors draft their legislative bills for a parliamentary bourgeois republic, or until the pedants and routine-worshippers of petty-bourgeois "Social-Democracy," like Mr. Plekhanov or Kautsky, renounce their distortions of the Marxist doctrine of the state.

Marxism differs from anarchism in the fact that it recognizes the *necessity* for a state and for state power in a period of revolution in general, and in the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism in particular.

Marxism differs from the petty-bourgeois, opportunist "Social-Democracy" of Messrs. *Plekhanov, Kautsky and Co. in the fact that it recognizes* that what is required during the said periods is *not* a state of the customary parliamentary bourgeois republican type, but a state of the Paris Commune type.

The main differences between a state of the latter type and the old state are as follows.

It is extremely easy (as history proves) to revert from a parliamentary bourgeois republic to a monarchy, for all the machinery of repression—the army, the police, and the bureaucracy—is left intact. The Commune and the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies *smash* and abolish that machinery.

The parliamentary bourgeois republic hampers and stifles the independent political life of the *masses* and their direct participation in the *democratic* organization of the life of the state from top to bottom. The contrary is the case with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

The latter reproduce the type of state which was being evolved by the Paris Commune and which Marx described as "the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labour."**

* In his letter to Bebel of March 18-28, 1875.—*Ed.*

** In *The Civil War in France*.—*Ed.*

The objection is usually offered that the Russian people are not yet prepared for the "introduction" of the Commune. This was the argument of the serfowners when they claimed that the peasants were not ready for freedom. The Commune, *i.e.*, the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, does not "introduce," does not intend to "introduce," and must not introduce *any* reforms which have not absolutely matured both in economic reality and in the consciousness of the overwhelming majority of the people. The greater the economic collapse and the crisis produced by the war, the more urgent becomes the need for a more perfect political form, which will *facilitate* the healing of the frightful wounds inflicted on mankind by the war. The less the organizational experience of the Russian people, the more resolutely must we *proceed* to organizational development by the *people themselves*, and not merely by the bourgeois politicians and "well-placed" bureaucrats.

The sooner we cast off the old prejudices of a Marxism falsified and garbled by Messrs. Plekhanov, Kautsky and Co., the more diligently we set about helping the people to organize Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies everywhere and immediately, and the latter to take *all aspects* of life under their control, and the longer Messrs. Lvov and Co. delay the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the easier will it be for the people (through the medium of the Constituent Assembly, or independently of it, if Lvov delays its convocation too long) to cast their decision in favour of a Republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. Blunders during the new process of organizational development by the people themselves are at first inevitable; but it is better to blunder and go forward than to *wait* until the professors of law summoned by Mr. Lvov draft their laws for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, for the perpetuation of the parliamentary bourgeois republic and for the strangling of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

If we organize and conduct our propaganda skilfully, not only the proletarians, but nine-tenths of the peasantry will be opposed to the restoration of the police, will be opposed to an irremovable and privileged bureaucracy and to an army separated from the people. And that alone comprises the new type of state.

12. The substitution of a people's militia for the police is a reform that follows from the entire course of the revolution and that is now being introduced in most parts of Russia. We must explain to the masses that in most of the bourgeois revolutions of the usual type, this reform has always been extremely short-lived, and that the bourgeoisie—even the most democratic and republican—restored the police of the old, tsarist type, a police separated from the people, commanded by the bourgeois and adapted in every way to oppressing the people.

There is only one way to *prevent* the restoration of the police, namely, to create a people's militia and to fuse it with the army (the standing army to be replaced by the universally armed people). Service in this

militia should extend to all citizens of both sexes between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five without exception, if these tentatively suggested age limits may be taken as determining the participation of adolescents and old people Capitalists must pay their workers, servants, etc , for days devoted to public service in the militia Unless women are brought to take an independent part not only in political life generally, but also in daily and universal public *service, it is idle to speak* even of a complete and stable democracy, let alone Socialism And such "police" functions as care of the sick and of homeless children, food inspection, etc , will never be satisfactorily discharged until women are on an equal footing with men, not nominally but in reality

The tasks which the proletariat must put before the masses in order to protect, consolidate and develop the revolution are to prevent the restoration of the police and to enlist the organizational forces of the entire people in the creation of a universal militia

THE AGRARIAN AND NATIONAL PROGRAMS

13 At the present moment we cannot say for certain whether a powerful agrarian revolution will develop in the Russian countryside in the near future We cannot say how profound is the class cleavage, which has undoubtedly grown *more profound latterly, between the agricultural* labourers, wage workers and poor peasants ("semi proletarians'), on the *one hand, and the well-to do and middle peasants (capitalists and petty* capitalists), on the other. Such questions will be decided, and, can be decided, *only* by actual experience

But as the party of the proletariat we are in duty bound not only to announce an agrarian (land) program immediately but also to advocate *practical measures which are immediately realizable in the interests of* the peasant agrarian revolution in Russia

We must demand the nationalization of *all* the land, i e , that all the land in the state should become the property of the central state power This power shall fix the size, etc , of the migration fund, pass legislation for the conservation of forests, for land improvement, etc , and absolutely prohibit the intermediary of middlemen between the owner of the land, i e , the state, and the tenant, i e , the tiller (prohibit all sub letting of land) However, the *disposal* of the land, the determination of the *local regulations* governing tenure of land, must in no case be left in the hands of bureaucrats and officials, but must be vested exclusively *in the* regional and local *Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.*

In order to improve the technique of grain growing *and to increase* output, and in order *to develop* rational cultivation on a large scale under public control, we *must* endeavour through the Peasants' Committees to secure the transformation of every confiscated estate into a

large model farm controlled by the *Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies*.

In order to counteract the petty-bourgeois phrasemongering and policy prevailing among the Socialist-Revolutionaries, particularly the idle talk about "consumption" standards or "labour standards," the "socialization of the land," etc., the party of the proletariat must make it clear that the small farming system under commodity production *offers no escape* for mankind from the poverty and oppression of the masses.

Without necessarily splitting the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies at once, the party of the proletariat must make clear the necessity of organizing separate Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies and separate Soviets of deputies from the poor (semi-proletarian) peasants, or, at least, of holding constant separate conferences of deputies *of this class status* in the shape of separate fractions or parties within the general Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. Otherwise all the honeyed petty-bourgeois talk of the Narodniks regarding the peasants in general will but serve as a shield for the deception practised on the propertyless masses by the well-to-do peasants, who are but one variety of *capitalists*.

To counteract the bourgeois-liberal or purely bureaucratic sermons preached by many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who advise the peasants not to seize the landed estates and not to start agrarian reform pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, the party of the proletariat must urge the peasants to carry out agrarian reform at once, on their own initiative, and to confiscate the landed estates immediately, upon the decision of the peasants' deputies in the localities.

At the same time, it is particularly important to insist on the necessity of *increasing* the production of foodstuffs for the soldiers at the front and for the towns, and on the absolute inadmissibility of any damage to livestock, implements, machinery, structures, etc.

14. As regards the national question, the proletarian party first of all must insist on the promulgation and immediate realization of complete freedom of secession from Russia for all the nations and peoples who were oppressed by tsarism, or who were forcibly joined to, or forcibly retained within, the boundaries of the state, *i.e.*, annexed.

All statements, declarations and manifestos concerning renunciation of annexations, but not accompanied by the realization of the right of secession in practice, are but bourgeois frauds practised on the people, or else pious petty-bourgeois wishes.

The proletarian party strives to create as large a state as possible, for that is to the advantage of the toilers; it strives to bring about *closer ties* between nations and the *further fusion* of nations; but it desires to achieve this aim not by force, but exclusively by a free, fraternal union of the workers and the toiling masses of all nations.

The more democratic the Russian republic is, and the more successfully it organizes itself into a Republic of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, the more powerful will be the force of *voluntary* attraction to such a republic on the part of the toiling masses of *all* nations

Complete freedom of secession, the broadest local (and national) autonomy, and detailed guarantees of *the rights of national minorities*—such is the program of the revolutionary proletariat

NATIONALIZATION OF THE BANKS AND CAPITALIST SYNDICATES

15 *The party of the proletariat* cannot set itself the aim of "introducing" Socialism in a country of small peasants as long as the overwhelming majority of the population has not come to realize the need for a Socialist revolution

But only bourgeois sophists, hiding behind "near Marxist" catchwords, can derive from this truth a justification of the policy of postponing immediate revolutionary measures, the time for which is fully ripe, *which have been* frequently *resorted to during the war by a number of bourgeois states*, and which are absolutely essential in order to combat impending total economic disorganization and famine

Such measures as the nationalization of the land, of all the banks and capitalist syndicates, or, at least, the *immediate* establishment of the *control* of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, etc , over them—measures which do not in any way imply the "introduction" of Socialism—must be absolutely insisted on, and, whenever possible, effected by revolutionary means Without such measures, which are only steps towards Socialism, and which are entirely feasible economically, it will be *impossible to heal the wounds caused by the war and to avert the impending collapse, and* the party of the revolutionary proletariat will never hesitate to lay hands on the fabulous profits of the capitalists and bankers, who are scandalously enriching themselves on the war

THE SITUATION WITHIN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

16 The international obligations of the working class of Russia are *now* coming to the forefront with particular force

Only the lazy do not swear by internationalism these days Even the chauvinist defencists, even Messrs Plekhanov and Potresov, even Kerensky, call themselves internationalists *All the more urgently, therefore,* does it become the duty of the proletarian party to draw a clear, precise and definite distinction between internationalism in deeds and internationalism in words

Mere appeals to the workers of all countries, empty assurances of devotion to internationalism, direct or indirect attempts to establish a "sequence" of revolutionary proletarian actions in the various belligerent countries, efforts to conclude "agreements" between the Socialists of the belligerent countries *on the question* of the revolutionary struggle, pother over the summoning of Socialist congresses *for the purpose* of a peace campaign, etc., etc.—no matter how sincere the authors of such ideas, efforts, and plans may be—amount, as far as their *objective* significance is concerned, to mere phrasemongering, and *at best* are innocent and pious wishes, fit only to conceal the *fooling* of the masses by the chauvinists. The *French* social-chauvinists, who are the most adroit and best-versed in methods of parliamentary juggling, have long ago broken the record for incredibly loud and resonant pacifist and internationalist phrases *coupled with* the most brazen betrayal of Socialism and the International, the acceptance of posts in governments engaged in the imperialist war, the voting of credits *or loans* (as Chkheidze, Skobelev, Tsereteli and Steklov have been doing recently in Russia), active opposition to the revolutionary struggle *in their own country*, etc., etc.

Good people often forget the brutal and savage setting of the imperialist World War. This setting does not tolerate phrases, and mocks at innocent and pious wishes.

There is one, and only one kind of internationalism in deed: working wholeheartedly for the development of the revolutionary movement and the revolutionary struggle *in one's own* country, and supporting (by propaganda, sympathy and material aid) *such, and only such, a struggle* and such a line in *every* country without exception.

Everything else is deception and Manilovism.*

In the period of over two years of war the international Socialist and labour movement in *every* country has evolved three trends. Whoever ignores *reality* and refuses to recognize the existence of these three trends, to analyse them, to fight persistently for the trend that is really internationalist, is doomed to impotence, helplessness and error.

The three trends are:

1) The social-chauvinists, *i.e.*, Socialists in words and chauvinists in deeds, people who are in favour of "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war (and particularly in the present imperialist war).

These people are our *class* enemies. They have gone over to the bourgeoisie.

They include the majority of the official leaders of the official Social-Democratic parties in *all* countries—Messrs. Plekhanov and Co. in Russia, the Scheidemanns in Germany, Renaudel, Guesde and Sembat in France, Bissolati and Co. in Italy, Hyndman, the Fabians and the Labourites

---

* *Manilovism*—fruitless daydreaming. So called after Manilov—one of the characters in *Dead Souls*, a novel by the Russian writer N. V. Gogol.—*Ed.*

the leaders of the "Labour Party") in England, Branting and Co in Sweden, Troelstra and his party in Holland, Stauning and his party in Denmark, Victor Berger and the other "defenders of the fatherland" in America, and so forth

2) The second trend is what is known as the "Centre," consisting of people who vacillate between the social chauvinists and the true internationalists

All those who belong to the "Centre" vow and swear that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are in favour of peace, of bringing every kind of "pressure" to bear upon the governments, of "demanding" that their own government should "ascertain the will of the people for peace," that they favour all sorts of peace campaigns, that they are for peace without annexations, etc , etc ,—*and for peace with the social chauvinists.* The "Centre" is for "unity," the "Centre" is opposed to a split

The "Centre" is a realm of honeyed petty-bourgeois phrases, of internationalism in words and cowardly opportunism and fawning on the social-chauvinists in deeds

The fact of the matter is that the "Centre" is not convinced of the necessity *for a revolution against one's own government, it does not preach* revolution, it does not carry on a wholehearted revolutionary struggle, and in order to evade such a struggle it resorts to the tritest ultra "Marxist" *excuses*

The social chauvinists are our *class enemies, bourgeois* within the labour movement *They represent strata, or groups, or sections of the working* class which *objectively* have been bribed by the bourgeoisie (by better wages, positions of honour, etc), and which help *their* bourgeoisie to plunder and oppress small and weak peoples and to fight *for* the division of the capitalist spoils

The "Centre" consists of routine worshippers, *slaves to rotten legality*, corrupted by the atmosphere of parliamentarism, etc , bureaucrats accustomed to snug positions and soft jobs Historically and economically speaking, they do not represent a *separate* stratum but are a *transition* from a past phase of the labour movement—the phase between 1871 and 1914, which gave much that is valuable to the proletariat, *particularly in the* indispensable art of slow, sustained and systematic organizational work on a large and very large scale—*to a* new *phase*, a phase that became *objectively* essential with the outbreak of the first imperialist World War, which inaugurated *the era of Socialist revolution*

The chief leader and representative of the "Centre" *is* Karl Kautsky the most outstanding authority in the Second International (1889 1914) Since August 1914 he has presented a picture of utterly bankrupt Marxism of unheard of spinelessness, and a series of the most wretched vacillations and betrayals This "Centrist" trend includes Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and the so called "labour group" (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft*) *in the Reichstag* in France it includes Longuet, Pressemanne and the "minoritaires" (Mer

sheviks) in general; in England, Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and many other leaders of the Independent Labour Party, and a section of the British Socialist Party; Morris Hillquit and many others in the United States; Turati, Trèves, Modigliani and others in Italy; Robert Grimm and others in Switzerland; Victor Adler and Co. in Austria; the party of the Organization Committee, Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze, Tsereteli and others in Russia, and so forth.

It goes without saying that at times individual persons unconsciously drift from social-chauvinism to "Centrism," and *vice versa*. Every Marxist knows, however, that classes are distinct, even though individuals may move freely from one class to another; similarly, *currents* in political life are distinct, in spite of the fact that individuals may drift freely from one current to another, and in spite of all attempts and efforts to *amalgamate* currents.

3) The third trend, the true internationalists, is most closely represented by the "Zimmerwald Left."* (We reprint as a supplement its manifesto of September 1915, in order that the reader may become acquainted in the original with the inception of this trend.**)

It is characterized mainly by its complete rupture with both social-chauvinism and "Centrism," and by its relentless revolutionary war against *its own* imperialist government and against *its own* imperialist bourgeoisie. Its principle is: "Our greatest enemy is at home." It wages a ruthless struggle against honeyed social-pacifist phrases (a social-pacifist is a Socialist in words and a bourgeois pacifist in deeds; bourgeois pacifists dream of an everlasting peace *without* the overthrow of the yoke and domination of capital) and against all *subterfuges* employed to deny the possibility, or the appropriateness, or the timeliness of a proletarian revolutionary struggle and of a proletarian Socialist revolution *in connection* with the present war.

The most outstanding representative of this trend in Germany is the Spartacus Group or the Group of the International, to which Karl Liebknecht belongs. Karl Liebknecht is one of the most celebrated representatives of this trend and of the *new*, and genuine, proletarian International.

Karl Liebknecht called upon the workers and soldiers of Germany to *turn their guns* against *their own* government. Karl Liebknecht did that openly from the parliamentary tribune (the Reichstag). He then went to a demonstration on Potsdamer Platz, one of the largest public squares in Berlin, with illegally printed leaflets proclaiming the slogan "Down with the government!" He was arrested and sentenced to *hard labour*. He is

---

* *"Zimmerwald Left"*—the Left group formed by Lenin at the First International Conference of Internationalists convened in September 1915, at Zimmerwald, during the First World War (1914-18). The "Zimmerwald Left" united the revolutionary elements in the international Socialist movement.—*Ed.*

** See "The Manifesto of the International Socialist Conference in Zimmerwald," Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. XVIII, Book II.—*Ed.*

now serving his term in a German penal prison, like *hundreds*, if not thousands, of other *true* German Socialists who have been imprisoned for struggle against the war

Karl Liebknecht in his speeches and letters mercilessly attacked not only *his own* Plekhanov's and Potresov's (Scheidemann, Legien, David and Co), *but also his own people of the Centre*, his own Chkheidzes and Tseretelis (Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and Co)

Karl Liebknecht and his friend, Otto Ruhle, two out of one hundred and ten deputies, violated discipline, destroyed the "unity" with the "Centre" and the chauvinists, and *went against all of them* Liebknecht *alone* represents Socialism, the proletarian cause, the proletarian revolution *All* the rest of German Social Democracy, to quote the apt words of Rosa Luxemburg (also a member and one of the leaders of the Spartacus Group), is a *"stinking corpse"*

Another group of internationalists *in deeds in Germany is that gathered* around the Bremen paper *Arbeiterpolitik*

Closest to the internationalists in deeds are in France, Loriot and his friends (Bourderon and Merrheim have degenerated to social pacifism), as well as the Frenchman, Henri Guilbeaux, who publishes in Geneva the magazine *Demain*, in England, the *Trade Unionist*, and *some* of the members of the British Socialist Party and of the Independent Labour Party (for instance, William Russell, who openly called for a break with the leaders who have *betrayed* Socialism), the Scottish schoolteacher and Socialist, *MacLean*, who was sentenced to *hard labour* by the bourgeois government of England for his revolutionary fight against the war, and hundreds of British Socialists who are in jail for the same offence They, and they alone, are internationalists *in deeds* In the United States, *the Socialist Labour Party and the elements within the opportunist* Socialist Party who in January 1917 began the publication of the paper, *The Internationalist, in Holland, the Party of the* "Tribunites," which publishes the paper *Tribune* (Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, Wijnkoop, and Henrietta Roland Holst), which, although Centrist at Zimmerwald, has now joined our ranks, in Sweden, the party of the youth, or the Left, led by Lindhagen, Ture Nermann, Carlson, Stroem and Z. Höglund, who at Zimmerwald was personally active in the organization of the "Zimmerwald Left," and who is now in prison for his revolutionary fight against the war, in Denmark, Trier and his friends, who have *left* the now purely *bourgeois* "Social Democratic" Party of Denmark, headed by the *Minister* Stauning, in Bulgaria, the "Tesniaks", in Italy, the nearest are Constantine Lazzari, secretary of the party, and Serrati, editor of the central organ, *Avanti*, *in Poland*, Radek, Hanecki and other leaders of the Social Democrats united under the "Regional Administration," and Rosa Luxemburg, Tyszka and other leaders of the Social Democrats united under the 'Chief Administration", in Switzerland, those Lefts who drew up the argument for the "referendum" (January 1917) directed

against the social-chauvinists and the "Centre" of *their own* country, and who at the Zurich Cantonal Socialist Convention, held at Töss on February 11, 1917, moved a consistently revolutionary resolution against the war; in Austria, the young Left-wing friends of Friedrich Adler, who acted partly through the Karl Marx Club in Vienna, now closed by the arch-reactionary Austrian government, which is torturing Fr. Adler for his heroic although ill-considered shooting of a Minister, and so on.

We are dealing here not with shades of opinion, which certainly exist even among the Lefts. We have here a *trend*. The fact is that it is by no means easy to be an internationalist in deeds during a frightful imperialist war. Such people are few; but it is on such people *alone* that the future of Socialism depends; they *alone* are *the leaders of the masses*, and not corrupters of the masses.

The difference between the reformists and revolutionaries among the Social-Democrats and Socialists generally was objectively bound to undergo a change in the circumstances of an imperialist war. Those who confine themselves to "demanding" that the bourgeois governments should conclude peace or "ascertain the will of the peoples for peace," etc., are *actually* slipping into reforms. *For*, objectively, *the problem of war* can be solved only in a *revolutionary way*.

There is no possibility of this war ending in a democratic, non-coercive peace and the liberation of the peoples from the burden of paying *billions* in interest to the capitalists, who have grown rich "on the war," except by a revolution of the proletariat.

The most varied reforms can be and must be demanded of the bourgeois governments, but without being guilty of Manilovism and reformism one cannot demand that people and classes who are entangled by the thousand threads of imperialist capital should *break* those threads. And unless they are broken, all talk of a war against war is idle and deceitful prattle.

The "Kautskyites," the "Centre," are revolutionaries in words and reformists in deeds, they are internationalists in words and accomplices of the social-chauvinists in deeds.

THE COLLAPSE OF THE ZIMMERWALD INTERNATIONAL—THE NEED FOR A THIRD INTERNATIONAL

17. From the very outset, the Zimmerwald International adopted a vacillating, "Kautskyite," "Centrist" position, which immediately compelled the *Zimmerwald Left* to dissociate itself, to separate itself from the rest, and to issue *its own* manifesto (published in Switzerland in Russian, German and French).

The chief defect of the Zimmerwald International, and the cause of its *collapse* (for from a political and ideological point of view it has already collapsed), was its vacillation and indecision on the extremely important

question, one of *crucial* practical significance, the question of breaking completely with social chauvinism and the old social chauvinist International, headed by Vandervelde and Huysmans at The Hague (Holland), etc

It is not as yet known in Russia that the Zimmerwald majority are *really Kautskyites* Yet this is an important fact, one which cannot be ignored, and which is now generally known in Western Europe Even that chauvinist, that extreme German chauvinist, Heilmann, editor of the ultra-chauvinist *Chemnitzer Volksstimme* and contributor to Parvus' ultra-chauvinist *Glocke* (a "Social Democrat," of course, and an ardent partisan of Social Democratic "unity"), was *compelled to acknowledge in* the press that the Centre, or "Kautskyism," and the *Zimmerwald majority* are one and the same thing

This fact was definitely established at the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917 In spite of the fact that social pacifism was condemned by the Kienthal Manifesto,* the *whole* Zimmerwald Right, the *entire* Zimmerwald majority, sank to social pacifism Kautsky and Co in a series of utterances in January and February 1917, Bourderon and Merrheim in France, who cast their votes *in unanimity* with the social chauvinists for the pacifist resolutions of the Socialist Party (December 1916) and of the *Confederation Générale du Travail* (the national organization of the French trade unions, also in December 1916), Turati and Co in Italy, where the entire party took up a social pacifist position, while Turati himself, in a speech delivered on December 17, 1916, "slipped" (not by accident, of course) into *nationalist* phrases tending to present the imperialist war in a favourable light

In January 1917, the chairman of the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences, Robert Grimm, joined hands with the social chauvinists of *his own* party (Greulich, Pfluger, Gustave Muller and others) *against* the true internationalists

At two conferences of *Zimmerwaldists* of several countries, in January and February 1917, this equivocal, double faced behaviour of the Zimmerwald majority was formally stigmatized by the Left internationalists of several countries by Munzenberg, secretary of the international youth organization and editor of the excellent internationalist publication *Die Jugendinternationale*, by Zinoviev, representative of the Central Committee of our Party, by K Radek, of the Polish Social Democratic Party (the "Regional Administration") and by Hartstein, a German Social Democrat and member of the Spartacus Group

To the Russian proletariat much has been given Nowhere on earth has the working class yet succeeded in developing as much revolutionary energy as in Russia *But to whom much has been given, of him much is demanded*

* *Kienthal Manifesto*—adopted at the Second International Conference of Internationalists held in Kienthal in 1916 —*Ed*

The Zimmerwald bog can no longer be tolerated. We must not, for the sake of the Zimmerwald "Kautskyites," continue the semi-alliance with the chauvinist International of the Plekhanovs and Scheidemanns. We must break with this International immediately. We must remain in Zimmerwald *only* for purposes of information.

It is we who must found, and immediately, without delay, a *new*, revolutionary, proletarian International, or rather, we must not fear to acknowledge publicly that this new International is *already established* and working.

This is the International of those "internationalists in deeds" whom I specifically enumerated above. They and they alone are representatives of the revolutionary, internationalist masses, and not corrupters of the masses.

True, there are few Socialists *of that type*; but let every Russian worker ask himself how many really conscious revolutionaries there were in Russia *on the eve* of the February-March Revolution of 1917.

The question is not one of numbers, but of giving correct expression to the ideas and policy of the truly revolutionary proletariat. The essential thing is not to "proclaim" internationalism, but to be an internationalist in deeds, even when times are most trying.

Let us not deceive ourselves with hopes of agreements and international congresses. As long as the imperialist war lasts, international relations will be held in a vice by the military dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie. If even the "republican" Milyukov, who is obliged to tolerate the "parallel government" of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, *did not allow Fritz Platten*, the Swiss Socialist, secretary of the Party, an internationalist and participant in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences, to enter Russia in April 1917, in spite of the fact that Platten is married to a Russian woman and was on his way to visit his wife's relatives, and in spite of the fact that he had taken part in the Revolution of 1905 in Riga, for which he had been confined in a Russian prison, had given bail to the tsarist government for his release and desired to have that bail returned—if the "republican" Milyukov could *do such a thing* in April 1917 in Russia, one may judge how much stock may be taken in the promises and offers, phrases and declarations of the bourgeoisie on the subject of peace without annexations, and so on.

And how about the arrest of Trotsky by the British government? How about the refusal to allow Martov to leave Switzerland, and the attempt to lure him to England, where Trotsky's fate awaits him?

Let us harbour no illusions. We must not deceive ourselves.

To "wait" for international congresses or conferences is simply to *betray* internationalism, since it has been shown that even from Stockholm neither Socialists loyal to internationalism *nor even their letters* are allowed to enter here, although this is quite possible and although there is a rigorous military censorship.

Our Party must not "wait," but must immediately *found* a Third International. Hundreds of Socialists imprisoned in Germany and England will thereupon heave a sigh of relief, thousands and thousands of German workers who are now organizing strikes and demonstrations, which are frightening that scoundrel and brigand, Wilhelm, will learn from *illegal* leaflets of our decision, of our fraternal confidence in Karl Liebknecht, and in him alone, of *our* decision to fight "revolutionary defencism" *right away*, they will read and be strengthened in their revolutionary internationalism.

To whom much has been given, of him much is demanded There is no other land on earth as free as Russia is *now* Let us make use of this freedom, not to advocate support of the bourgeoisie, or of bourgeois "revolutionary defencism," but, in a bold, honest, proletarian, Liebknecht way, *to found the Third International*, an International uncompromisingly hostile to the social chauvinist traitors and to the vacillators of the 'Centre "

18 After what has been said, one need not waste many words in explaining that the amalgamation of Social Democrats in Russia is out of the question

It is better to remain alone, like Liebknecht, and *that means remaining with the revolutionary proletariat*, than to entertain even for a moment any thought of amalgamation with the party of the Organization Committee, with Chkheidze and Tsereteli, who can tolerate a bloc with Potresov in the *Rabochaya Gazeta*,* who voted for the loan** in the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and who have degenerated to "defencism "

Let the dead bury their dead.

Whoever wants to *help* the vacillating must first stop vacillating himself

A SCIENTIFICALLY SOUND NAME FOR OUR PARTY THAT WILL POLITICALLY HELP TO CLARIFY PROLETARIAN CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

19 I now come to the last point, the name of our Party We must call ourselves a *Communist Party*—just as Marx and Engels called themselves

We must repeat that we are Marxists and that we take as our basis the *Communist Manifesto*, which has been perverted and betrayed by the Social Democrats on two main points 1) the workers have no country, "defence of the fatherland" in an imperialist war is a betrayal of Socialism,

---

* *Rabochaya Gazeta* (*Workers Gazette*)—Central organ of the Menshevik Party published in Petrograd between March and November 1917 —*Ed*

** *I e*, the Liberty Loan issued by the Provisional Government in 1917 to help finance the imperialist war —Ed

and 2) the Marxist doctrine of the state has been perverted by the Second International.

The term "Social-Democracy" is *scientifically* incorrect, as Marx frequently pointed out, in particular, in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* in 1875, and as Engels reaffirmed in a more popular form in 1894. From capitalism mankind can pass directly only to Socialism, *i.e.*, to the social ownership of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual. Our Party looks farther ahead: Socialism is bound to pass gradually into Communism, upon the banner of which is inscribed the motto, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

That is my first argument.

Here is the second: the second part of the name of our Party (Social-*Democrats*) is also scientifically incorrect. Democracy is one of the forms of the *state*, whereas we Marxists are opposed to *all and every kind* of state.

The leaders of the Second International (1889-1914), Messrs. Plekhanov, Kautsky and their like, have vulgarized and perverted Marxism.

The difference between Marxism and anarchism is that Marxism recognizes *the necessity of the state* for the purpose of the transition to Socialism; but (and here is where we differ from Kautsky and Co.) *not a state* of the type of the usual parliamentary, bourgeois, democratic republic, but a state like the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Soviets of Workers' Deputies of 1905 and 1917.

My third argument: *the course of events*, the revolution, has *already actually* established in our country, although in a weak and embryonic form, precisely this new type of "state," which is not a state in the proper sense of the word.

This is *already* a matter of the practical action of the masses, and not merely of theories of the leaders.

The state in the proper sense of the term is the power exercised over the masses by detachments of armed men separated from the people.

Our new state, *now in process of being born*, is also a state, for we too need detachments of armed men: we too need the *strictest* order, and must *ruthlessly* and forcibly crush all attempts at either a tsarist or a Guchkov-bourgeois counter-revolution.

But our new state, *now in process of being born*, is *no longer* a state in the proper sense of the term, for in many parts of Russia these detachments of armed men are *the masses themselves*, the entire people, and not merely privileged individuals, placed above and separated from the people and in practice not subject to recall.

We must look forward, and not backward to the usual bourgeois type of democracy, which consolidated the rule of the bourgeoisie with the aid of the old, *monarchist* organs of government—the police, the army and the bureaucracy.

We must look forward to the new democracy which is in process of being born, and which is already ceasing to be a democracy For democracy means the rule of the people, whereas the armed people cannot rule over themselves

The term democracy is not only scientifically incorrect when applied to a Communist Party, it has now, since March 1917, simply become a *blinker* covering the eyes of the revolutionary people and *preventing* them from boldly and freely, on their own initiative, building up the new the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and all other Deputies, as *the sole power* in the "state" and as the harbinger of the "withering away" of the state *in every form*

My fourth argument we must reckon with the actual situation in which Socialism finds itself internationally

It is not what it was during the years *1871* to *1914*, when Marx and Engels consciously reconciled themselves to the inaccurate, opportunist term "Social Democracy " For *in those days*, after the defeat of the Paris Commune, history demanded slow organizational and educational work Nothing else was possible The anarchists were then (as they are now) fundamentally wrong not only theoretically, but also economically and politically The anarchists wrongly estimated the character of the times, for they did not understand the world situation the worker of England corrupted by imperialist profits, the Commune defeated in Paris, the recent (1871) triumph of the bourgeois national movement in Germany, the age long sleep of semi feudal Russia

Marx and Engels gauged the times accurately, they understood the international situation, they realized that the approach to the beginning of the social revolution must be *slow*

We, in our turn, must also understand the peculiarities and the tasks of the new era Let us not imitate those sorry Marxists of whom Marx said "I have sown dragons and have reaped a harvest of fleas "

The objective needs of capitalism grown into imperialism brought about the imperialist war The war has brought mankind to the *brink of a precipice*, to the destruction of civilization, to the brutalization and destruction of countless millions of human beings

There *is no* escape except by a proletarian revolution

And at the very moment when such a revolution is beginning, when it is taking its first timorous, uncertain and groping steps, steps betraying too great a confidence in the bourgeoisie, at that moment the majority (that is the truth, that is a fact) of the "Social Democratic" leaders, of the "Social Democratic" parliamentarians, of the "Social Democratic" papers—and these are the *organs* for influencing the masses—have *deserted* Socialism, have *betrayed* Socialism and have gone over to the side of "their" national bourgeoisie

The masses have been confused, led astray and deceived by *these* leaders

And are we to aid and abet that deception by retaining the old and antiquated Party name, which is as decayed as the Second International?

Let it be granted that "many" workers *understand* Social-Democracy in an honest way; but it is time we knew how to distinguish the subjective from the objective.

Subjectively, such Social-Democratic workers are most loyal leaders of the proletarian masses.

Objectively, however, the world situation is such that the old name of our Party *makes it easier* to fool the masses and *impedes* the onward march; for at every step, in every paper, in every parliamentary group, the masses see *leaders*, *i.e.*, the people whose voices carry farthest and whose actions are most prominent; yet they are all "also-Social-Democrats," they are all "for unity" with the betrayers of Socialism, with the social-chauvinists; and they are all presenting for payment the old bills issued by "Social-Democracy. . . ."

And what are the opposing arguments? . . . We shall be confused with the Anarchist-Communists, we are told. . . .

Why are we not afraid of being confused with the Social-Nationalists, the Social-Liberals, or the Radical-Socialists, the foremost and most adroit bourgeois party in the French Republic in deceiving the masses?. . . We are told: The masses have grown used to the name, the workers have learnt to "love" *their* Social-Democratic Party.

That is the only argument. But it is an argument that disregards the science of Marxism, the tasks of the immediate morrow in the revolution, the objective position of world Socialism, the shameful collapse of the Second International, and the injury done to the practical cause by the pack of "also-Social-Democrats" who surround the proletarians.

It is an argument of routine, an argument of somnolence, an argument of inertia.

But we are out to rebuild the world. We are out to put an end to the imperialist World War in which hundreds of millions of people and the interests of billions and billions of capital are involved, and which cannot end in a truly democratic peace without a proletarian revolution, the greatest in the history of mankind.

Yet we are afraid of our own selves. We are loth to cast off the "dear old" soiled shirt. . . .

But it is time to cast off the soiled shirt and don a clean one.

Petrograd, April 10, 1917

First printed in pamphlet form
in September 1917

RESOLUTION ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

ADOPTED BY THE APRIL CONFERENCE

The existence of landed proprietorship in Russia is the material stronghold of the power of the feudal landlords and a pledge of the possibility of the restoration of the monarchy This form of land ownership inevitably condemns the overwhelming mass of the population of Russia, the peasantry, to poverty, bondage and downtroddenness, and the entire country to backwardness in every sphere of life

Peasant land ownership in Russia, as regards both allotted land (communal and homestead) and private land (leased or purchased), is enmeshed from top to bottom, and all around, by old, semi feudal ties and relations, by the division of the peasants into categories inherited from the time of serfdom, interspersed holdings, and so forth The necessity of breaking down these antiquated and injurious partitions, of "unenclosing" the land, and of completely reconstructing the relations of land ownership and agriculture so as to bring them into harmony with the new conditions of Russian and world economy, forms the material basis for the desire of the peasantry for the nationalization of *all* the land in the state

Whatever the petty bourgeois utopias in which all Narodnik parties and groups envelop the struggle of the peasant masses against feudal landed proprietorship and against all the feudal fetters which enmesh all land ownership and land tenure in Russia generally—in itself that struggle represents quite a bourgeois democratic, undoubtedly progressive, and economically essential desire resolutely to break all those fetters

Nationalization of the land, while it is a bourgeois measure, provides the greatest amount of freedom for the class struggle and the greatest exemption of land tenure from non bourgeois features that is possible and conceivable in a capitalist society Moreover, nationalization of the land, representing as it does the abolition of private ownership of land, would in practice deal such a mighty blow to the private ownership of all means of production in general that the party of the proletariat must assist such a reform in every possible way

On the other hand, the well-to-do peasants of Russia long ago evolved the elements of a peasant bourgeoisie, and the Stolypin agrarian reform has undoubtedly strengthened, multiplied and fortified these elements. At the other pole of the rural population, the agricultural wage-workers—the proletarians and the mass of semi-proletarian peasantry, who are akin to the proletarians—have likewise become strengthened and multiplied.

The more determined and consistent the break-up and elimination of the landed estates and the more determined and consistent the bourgeois-democratic agrarian reform in Russia in general, the more vigorous and speedy will be the development of the class struggle of the agricultural proletariat against the rich peasantry (the peasant bourgeoisie).

It will depend on whether the urban proletariat succeeds in securing the following of the rural proletariat, together with the mass of rural semi-proletarians, or whether this mass follows the peasant bourgeoisie, which is inclining towards an alliance with Guchkov and Milyukov, with the capitalists and landlords and the counter-revolution in general—as to how the fate and issue of the Russian revolution will be determined, if the incipient proletarian revolution in Europe does not exercise a direct and powerful influence on our country.

In view of this class situation and relation of forces, the conference resolves that:

1) The Party of the proletariat will fight with all its might for the immediate and entire confiscation of all landed estates in Russia (and also appanage lands, church lands, crown lands, etc., etc.);

2) The Party will vigorously advocate the immediate transfer of all lands to the peasantry organized under Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, or under other organs of local government elected in a really democratic way and entirely independent of the landlords and officials;

3) The Party of the proletariat demands the nationalization of all the land in the state; nationalization, which signifies the transfer of the right of ownership of all land to the state, entrusts the right of administering the land to local democratic institutions;

4) The Party must, on the one hand, wage a determined struggle against the Provisional Government, which, both through the mouthpiece of Shingaryov and by its collective utterances, is trying to force the peasants to come to "voluntary agreements with the landlords," *i.e.*, virtually to impose upon them a reform which suits the interests of the landlords, and is threatening the peasants with punishment for "arbitrary action," which is a threat of violence on the part of a minority of the population (the landlords and capitalists) against the majority. On the other hand, the Party must wage a determined struggle against the petty-bourgeois vacillations of the majority of the Narodniks and the Menshevik Social-Democrats, who are advising the peasants not to take the land pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly;

5) The Party recommends the peasants to take the land in an organized way, not allowing the slightest damage to property, and taking measures to increase production,

6) An agrarian reform can be successful and durable only provided the whole state is democratized, i e., provided, on the one hand, that the police, the standing army and the actually privileged bureaucracy have been abolished, and, on the other, that there exists a comprehensive system of local government entirely exempt from supervision and tutelage from above,

7) The separate and independent organization of the agricultural proletariat must be undertaken immediately and universally, both in the form of Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies (as well as of separate Soviets of deputies from the semi-proletarian peasantry), and in the form of proletarian groups or fractions within the general Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, on all local and municipal government bodies, etc , etc ,

8) The Party must support the initiative of those peasant committees which in a number of localities in Russia are handing over the livestock and implements of the landlords to the peasantry organized under those committees, for the purpose of their socially-regulated employment in the cultivation of all the land,

9) The Party of the proletariat must advise the rural proletarians and semi-proletarians to strive to organize on all landed estates fair-sized model farms to be conducted for the public account by the Soviets of Agricultural Labourers' Deputies under the direction of agricultural experts and with the application of the best technique

Soldatskaya Pravda (*Soldier's Truth*) No 13,
May 16 [3], 1917

RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

ADOPTED BY THE APRIL CONFERENCE *

The policy of national oppression, inherited from the autocracy and monarchy, is supported by the landlords, capitalists and petty-bourgeoisie in order to protect their class privileges and to cause disunity among the workers of the various nationalities. Modern imperialism, which increases the striving to subjugate weak nations, is a new factor intensifying national oppression.

To the extent that the elimination of national oppression is achievable at all in capitalist society, it is possible only under a consistently democratic republican system and state administration that guarantee complete equality for all nations and languages.

The right of all the nations forming part of Russia freely to secede and form independent states must be recognized. To deny them this right, or to fail to take measures guaranteeing its practical realization, is equivalent to supporting a policy of seizure and annexation. It is only the recognition by the proletariat of the right of nations to secede that can ensure complete solidarity among the workers of the various nations and help to bring the nations closer together on truly democratic lines.

The conflict which has at present arisen between Finland and the Russian Provisional Government is a striking illustration of the fact that the denial of the right of unhampered secession leads to a direct continuation of the policy of tsarism.

The right of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the expediency of secession of a given nation at a given moment. The Party of the proletariat must decide the latter question quite independently in each particular case from the standpoint of the interests of the social development as a whole and of the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat for Socialism.

The Party demands broad regional autonomy, the abolition of supervision from above, the abolition of a compulsory state language, and the determination of the boundaries of the self-governing and autonomous

* The resolution on the national question was adopted on April 29, 1917, following the report made by J. Stalin.—*Ed.*

regions by the local population itself in accordance with the economic and social conditions, the national composition of the population, and so forth

The Party of the proletariat resolutely rejects what is known as "national cultural autonomy," under which education, etc , is removed from the competence of the state and placed within the competence of some kind of national diets National cultural autonomy artificially divides the workers living in one locality, and even working in the same industrial enterprise, according to their various "national cultures", in other words it strengthens the ties between the workers and the bourgeois culture of individual nations, whereas the aim of the Social Democrats is to develop the international culture of the world proletariat

The Party demands that a fundamental law shall be embodied in the constitution annulling all privileges enjoyed by any nation whatever and all infringements of the rights of national minorities

The interests of the working class demand that the workers of all the nationalities of Russia should have common proletarian organizations political, trade union, educational institutions of the co operatives and so forth Only such common organizations of the workers of the various nationalities will make it possible for the proletariat to wage a successful struggle against international capital and bourgeois nationalism

Soldatskaya Pravda No 13
May 16 [3], 1917

FIRST ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES

May 4-28, 1917

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

1) All landed estates and privately owned lands, as well as appanages, church lands, etc., must be turned over immediately to the people without compensation.

2) The peasantry must in an organized manner, through their Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, immediately take over all the lands in their localities, for the purpose of their economic exploitation, without however in any way prejudicing the final settlement of agrarian relations by the Constituent Assembly or by an All-Russian Council of Soviets, shoul the people decide to entrust the central power of the state to such a Cou cil of Soviets.

3) Private property in land generally must be abolished, *i.e.*, ownership of the whole land shall be vested solely in the whole peop while the disposal of the land shall be entrusted to the local dem ocratic institutions.

4) The peasants must reject the advice of the capitalists and landlords and of their Provisional Government to come to "an agreement" with the landlords in each locality as to the immediate disposal of the land; the disposal of the land must be determined by the organized will of the majority of the local peasants, and not by an agreement between the majority, *i.e.*, the peasants, and the minority, and an insignificant minority at that, *i.e.*, the landlords.

5) Not only the landlords are resisting, and will continue to resist with every means at their disposal the transfer of the landed estates to the peasants without compensation, but also the capitalists, who wield tremendous monetary power and exercise great influence on the unenlightened masses through the newspapers, the numerous officials, employees, etc., accustomed to the domination of capital. Hence, the transfer without compensation of the landed estates to the peasantry cannot be effected completely or permanently unless the confidence of the peas-

regions by the local population itself in accordance with the economic and social conditions, the national composition of the population, and so forth

The Party of the proletariat resolutely rejects what is known as "national cultural autonomy," under which education, etc , is removed from the competence of the state and placed within the competence of some kind of national diets National cultural autonomy artificially divides the workers living in one locality, and even working in the same industrial enterprise, according to their various "national cultures", in other words it strengthens the ties between the workers and the bourgeois culture of individual nations, whereas the aim of the Social Democrats is to develop the international culture of the world proletariat

The Party demands that a fundamental law shall be embodied in the constitution annulling all privileges enjoyed by any nation whatever and all infringements of the rights of national minorities

The interests of the working class demand that the workers of all the nationalities of Russia should have common proletarian organizations political, trade union, educational institutions of the co operatives and so forth Only such common organizations of the workers of the various nationalities will make it possible for the proletariat to wage a successful struggle against international capital and bourgeois nationalism

oldatskaya Pravda No 13
ay 16 [3] 1917

FIRST ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF PEASANTS' DEPUTIES

MAY 4-28, 1917

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

1) All landed estates and privately owned lands, as well as appanages, church lands, etc., must be turned over immediately to the people without compensation.

2) The peasantry must in an organized manner, through their Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, immediately take over all the lands in their localities, for the purpose of their economic exploitation, without however in any way prejudicing the final settlement of agrarian relations by the Constituent Assembly or by an All-Russian Council of Soviets, should the people decide to entrust the central power of the state to such a Council of Soviets.

3) Private property in land generally must be abolished, *i.e.*, the ownership of the whole land shall be vested solely in the whole people, while the disposal of the land shall be entrusted to the local democratic institutions.

4) The peasants must reject the advice of the capitalists and landlords and of their Provisional Government to come to "an agreement" with the landlords in each locality as to the immediate disposal of the land; the disposal of the land must be determined by the organized will of the majority of the local peasants, and not by an agreement between the majority, *i.e.*, the peasants, and the minority, and an insignificant minority at that, *i.e.*, the landlords.

5) Not only the landlords are resisting, and will continue to resist with every means at their disposal the transfer of the landed estates to the peasants without compensation, but also the capitalists, who wield tremendous monetary power and exercise great influence on the unenlightened masses through the newspapers, the numerous officials, employees, etc., accustomed to the domination of capital. Hence, the transfer without compensation of the landed estates to the peasantry cannot be effected completely or permanently unless the confidence of the peas-

ant masses in the capitalists is undermined, unless a close alliance between the peasantry and the city workers is established, and unless the state power is completely transferred to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants' and other Deputies. Only a state power which is in the hands of such Soviets, and which governs the state not through a police, or a bureaucracy, or a standing army alienated from the people, but through a national, universal and armed militia of workers and peasants, can guarantee the *realization of the above-mentioned agrarian reforms*, which are being demanded by the entire peasantry.

6) Agricultural labourers and poor peasants, *i.e.*, such as for the lack of sufficient land, cattle and implements secure their livelihood partly by working for hire, must make every effort to organize themselves independently into separate Soviets, or into separate groups within the general Peasants' Soviets, in order that they may be in a position to defend their interests against the rich peasants, who will inevitably strive to form an alliance with the capitalists and landlords.

7) As a result of the war, Russia, like all the other belligerent countries, as well as many neutral countries, is being threatened by economic disruption, disaster and famine because of the lack of hands, coal, iron, etc. Only if the Workers' and Peasants' Deputies assume control and supervision over the production and distribution of goods can the country be saved. It is therefore necessary to proceed immediately to arrange greements between Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and Soviets of Work:s' Deputies regarding the exchange of grain and other rural products ır implements, shoes, clothing, etc., without the intermediary of the ıpitalists, who must be removed from the management of the factories. Vith the same purpose in view, the peasants' committees must be encourged to take over the livestock and implements of the landlords, such vestock and implements to be used in common. Similarly, the transforıation of all large private estates into model farms must be encouraged, ıe land *to be cultivated collectively with the aid of the best* implements nder the direction of agricultural experts and in accordance with the :cisions of the local Soviets of Agricultural Workers' Deputies.

ublished in 1917 in the pamphlet.
[aterials on the Agrarian Question

FIRST ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

June 3-23, 1917

SPEECH ON POLICY TOWARDS THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT
JUNE 4, 1917

Comrades, in the brief time placed at my disposal, I can dwell—and I think that would be most expedient—only on the fundamental questions of principle raised by the speaker for the Executive Committee and by subsequent speakers.

The first and main question that faced us was, *what is this assembly*, what are these Soviets which are gathered here at the All-Russian Congress, what is this revolutionary democracy that is spoken of here so endlessly in order to gloss over the fact that it is completely misunderstood and has been completely rejected? For to talk about revolutionary democracy at the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and at the same time to gloss over the character of this institution, its class composition and its role in the revolution—not to say a word about this, and at the same time to lay claim to the title of democrats, is strange indeed! They outline to us a program of a bourgeois parliamentary republic which has existed all over Western Europe; they outline to us a program of reforms which are now recognized by all bourgeois governments, including our own, and yet they talk to us about revolutionary democracy! To whom are they saying this? To the Soviets. But I ask you, is there a country in Europe, bourgeois, democratic, republican, where anything similar to these Soviets exists? You are bound to reply that there is no such country. Nowhere do similar institutions exist, nor can they exist, because—one of two things—*either* you have a bourgeois government with those "plans" of reform which are outlined to us here and which have been proposed dozens of times in all countries and have remained paper proposals; *or* you have the institution to which they are now appealing, that new type of "government" which has been created by the revolution and examples of which can be found only in the history of the greatest rise in the tide of revolution, for instance, in 1792 in France,

in 1871 in France, and in 1905 in Russia. The Soviets are an institution which does not exist in any usual type of bourgeois-parliamentary state, and which cannot exist side by side with a bourgeois government. They constitute that new, more democratic type of state which we in our Party resolutions have called a peasant-proletarian, democratic republic, in which the sole power belongs to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. In vain people think that this question is a theoretical one; *in vain are attempts being made to pretend that it can be evaded;* in vain are excuses being offered that at present certain institutions exist side by side with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Yes, they do exist side by side. But it is precisely this that is giving rise to countless misunderstandings, conflicts and friction. It is precisely this that is causing the first rise, the first advance of the Russian revolution to give way to its stagnation and to those retrograde steps which we are now witnessing in the whole home and foreign policy of our coalition government in connection with the preparations for an imperialist offensive.

One of two things: either the usual bourgeois government—in which case the peasants', workers', soldiers' and other Soviets are unnecessary and will either be dispersed by the generals, the counter-revolutionary generals, who have the army in their hands, without their paying the slightest heed to the oratory of Minister Kerensky, or they will die an inglorious death. There is no other alternative for these institutions, which can neither retreat nor stand still, and which can exist only by advancing. This is a type of state which was not invented by the Russians, but advanced by the revolution, because the revolution can win in no other way. Within the All-Russian Soviet, friction and the struggle of parties for power are inevitable. But this will imply overcoming possible mistakes and illusions by means of the political experience of the masses themselves (*commotion*), and not by the speeches of Ministers, in which *they refer to what they said yesterday, to what they will write* to-morrow and to what they will promise the day after to-morrow. This, comrades, is ridiculous from the standpoint of the institution which was created by the Russian revolution and which is now faced with the question: to be or not be? The Soviets cannot continue to exist in the way they exist now. Fully-grown people, workers and peasants, are obliged to meet, adopt resolutions and listen to speeches which cannot be subjected to any documentary test! This kind of institution is a transition to the republic which will create a stable power, without a police and without a standing army, not in word but in action, the power which cannot yet exist in Western Europe, the power without which there can be no victory for the Russian revolution, that is, no victory over the landlords and over imperialism.

Without such a power there can be no question of our obtaining such a victory ourselves. And the deeper we go into the program recommend-

ed to us here, and into the facts with which we are being faced, the more crassly does the fundamental contradiction stand out. We are told, as the chief speaker and other speakers told us, that the first Provisional Government was a bad one! But when the Bolsheviks, the confounded Bolsheviks, said: "No support for and no confidence in this government!"—how we were showered with accusations of "anarchism"! Now everybody says that the previous government was a bad one. But what about the coalition government with the near-Socialist Ministers—how does it differ from the previous one? Have we not had enough talk about programs and projects, have we not had enough of them, is it not time to get down to business? A month has already elapsed since May 6, when the coalition government was formed. Just look at the facts, just look at the chaos which prevails in Russia and in all the countries which have been involved in the imperialist war. What is the chaos due to? To the rapacity of the capitalists. That is where you have real anarchy! And this is admitted in statements published not in our newspaper, not in any Bolshevik newspaper—God forbid!—but in the Ministerial *Rabochaya Gazeta*, which said that industrial prices for coal deliveries were *raised* by the "revolutionary" government!! And the coalition government has changed nothing in this respect. We are asked: can Socialism be introduced in Russia, or can any radical changes generally be made at once? These are just empty excuses, comrades. The doctrine of Marx and Engels, as they always explained, consists in the following: "Our teachings are not a dogma, but a guide to action." Nowhere in the world is there pure capitalism passing into pure Socialism, nor can there be in time of war. But there is something in between, something new and unparalleled, because hundreds of millions of people who have been involved in the criminal war of the capitalists are perishing. The question is not the promising of reforms—that is mere talk. The question is to take the step we now need to take.

If you want to talk of "*revolutionary*" democracy, then you must distinguish this concept from *reformist* democracy under a capitalist Ministry, because it is time, after all, to pass from phrase-mongering about "revolutionary democracy," from congratulating ourselves on "revolutionary democracy," to a *class* description, as we have been taught to do by Marxism and by scientific Socialism generally. What they are proposing is that we should adopt reformist democracy under a capitalist Ministry. That may be excellent from the standpoint of the usual models in Western Europe. But now a number of countries are on the brink of ruin, and those practical measures which are supposedly so complicated that it is difficult to introduce them, and which must be especially elaborated, as the previous speaker, Citizen the Minister of Post and Telegraph* said, are perfectly clear. He said that there is no

* *Tsereteli.—Ed.*

political party in Russia that would express its readiness to take the entire power upon itself. I say there is! No party can refuse this, and our Party does not refuse it, it is prepared at any minute to take over the entire power [*Applause and laughter*]

You may laugh as much as you please, but if Citizen the Minister confronts us with this question side by side with the Right party, he will receive a suitable reply No party can refuse this And at a time when freedom still prevails, when threats of arrest and exile to Siberia—threats held out by the counter revolutionaries, with whom our near Socialist Ministers are sharing the government—are still only threats, at such a time every party would say, "Give us your confidence and we will give you our program "

This program was given by our conference on April 29 Unfortunately, it is being ignored and not taken as a guide Apparently, a popular explanation of it is required I shall endeavour to give Citizen the Minister of Post and Telegraph a popular explanation of our resolution, of our program Our program in reference to the economic crisis, is immediately—no delays are necessary for this—to demand the publication of all the fabulous profits, reaching as much as 500 and 800 per cent, which the capitalists are reaping, not as capitalists in the open market, under "pure" capitalism, but on war supplies Here, indeed, is where workers' control is essential and feasible Here you have the measure which, if you call yourselves "revolutionary" democrats, you should carry out in the name of the Soviet and which can be carried out overnight This is not Socialism This is opening the eyes of the people to the real anarchy and the real playing with imperialism, the playing with the property of the people, with the hundreds of thousands of lives which to morrow will perish so that we may continue to throttle Greece Publish the profits of the capitalists, arrest fifty or a hundred of the biggest millionaires It will be enough to keep them in custody for a few weeks, if only under the mild conditions under which Nicholas Romanov is being confined, with the simple purpose of compelling them to reveal the threads, the fraudulent practices, the filth and the greed which even under the new government are costing our country thousands and millions daily There you have the chief cause of anarchy and chaos And that is why we say that everything has remained as of old, that the coalition government has changed nothing and that it has only added a heap of declamations and florid statements However sincere they may have been, however sincerely they may have desired the welfare of the toilers, nothing has changed—*the old class* remains in power The policy they are pursuing is not a democratic policy

They talk to us about "democratizing the central and local power" Don't you know that these words are a novelty only in Russia, and that in other countries dozens of near-Socialist Ministers made similar promises to the country? What do they signify when we are faced by the liv

ing, concrete fact that while the population elects the power locally, the elements of democracy are being violated by the claims of the centre to appoint or confirm the local authorities? The capitalists are continuing to plunder the national wealth, the imperialist war is continuing; yet they promise us reforms, reforms and reforms, which generally cannot be accomplished under these circumstances, because the war crushes everything and determines everything. Why do you not agree with those who say that the war is *not* being waged on behalf of capitalist profits? What is the criterion? It is, first of all, the class which is in power, the class which continues to be the master, the class which continues to reap hundreds of billions in banking and financial operations. It is the same old capitalist class and that is why the war continues to be an imperialist war. Neither the first Provisional Government nor the government with the near-Socialist Ministers has changed anything. The secret treaties remain secret. Russia is fighting for the Straits and to continue Lyakhov's policy in Persia,* and so on.

I know that you do not want this, that the majority of you do not want it, and that the Ministers do not want it, because nobody can want it, for it means the slaughter of hundreds of millions of people. But take the offensive about which the Milyukovs and Maklakovs are talking so much at present. They realize full well what it means; they know that it is connected with the question of power, with the question of the revolution. We are told that we must distinguish between political and strategical questions. It is absurd to put the matter in this way. The Cadets fully realize that the question is a political one.

To say that the revolutionary struggle for peace that has begun from below may lead to a separate peace is a slander. The first step we would take if we had the power would be to arrest the bigger capitalists and to snap all the threads of their intrigues. Without this, all talk about a peace without annexations and indemnities is sheer phrasemongering. Our second step would be to declare to the peoples, apart from the governments, that we regard all capitalists as robbers—Tereshchenko, who is not a whit better than Milyukov, only a little more stupid, the French capitalists, the British capitalists, and all of them.

Your own newspaper, the *Izvestia*, has got into a muddle and proposes the *status quo*, instead of a peace without annexations and indemnities. No, that is not the way we understand a peace "without annexations." And even the Peasant Congress comes nearer the truth here when it speaks of a "federative" republic, thereby expressing the idea that the Russian republic does not want to oppress any nation, either in the new way or in the old way, and does not want to live on a basis of coercion

* *Lyakhov's policy in Persia*—so-called after Lyakhov, a Russian colonel who was commissioned to Persia in 1906 to suppress the "riots" in connection with the incipient revolution there. In 1908 he directed operations against and routed revolutionary Tabriz.—*Ed.*

with any people, neither with Finland nor with the Ukraine, with which the War Minister is trying so hard to pick a quarrel and with which unpardonable and impermissible conflicts are being created We want a single and indivisible Russian republic with a firm government, but a firm government can be secured only by the voluntary agreement of the nations "Revolutionary democracy"—these are big words, but they are being applied to a government that, by wretched pinpricks, is complicating relations with the Ukraine and Finland, which do not even want to secede but only say, "Don't postpone the application of the elementary principles of democracy until the Constituent Assembly!"

A peace without annexations and indemnities cannot be concluded until you have renounced your own annexations Why, it is absurd, it is a game, every worker in Europe is laughing at it, saying 'They talk very eloquently and call upon the nations to overthrow the bankers, but they send their own native bankers into the government' Arrest them, expose their machinations, get to know the threads! But that you do not do, although you have powerful organizations which cannot be resisted You have been through the experience of 1905 and 1917, you know that revolution is not made to order, that revolutions in other countries were made by the dire and bloody method of insurrection, while in Russia there is no group, no class, that could resist the power of the Soviets In Russia, by way of an exception, this revolution can be a peaceful revolution Let this revolution propose peace to all the nations today, or to morrow, by breaking with all the capitalist classes, and in a very short time consent will be received from both France and Germany, that is, from their peoples, because these countries are perishing, because the position of Germany is hopeless, because she cannot save herself, and because France

Chairman Your time has expired

Lenin I shall finish in half a minute [*Commotion, requests from the floor that time be extended, protests and applause*]

Chairman I have to inform the congress that the Presidium proposes that the speaker's time be extended Any objections? The majority are in favour of an extension

Lenin I stopped at the point that if revolutionary democracy in Russia were democracy not in word but in action, it would proceed to further the revolution and not to compromise with the capitalists, not to talk about a peace without annexations and indemnities but to abolish annexations in Russia, and to directly declare that it considers all annexations criminal and predatory It would then be possible to avoid the imperialist offensive, which is threatening the lives of thousands and millions of people in order to partition Persia and the Balkans The way to peace would then be open, not a simple way—we do not say that it is—a way which would not preclude a really revolutionary war

We do not put the question in the way Bazarov puts it in today's

Novaya Zhizn. All we say is that Russia has been placed in such circumstances that at the end of the imperialist war her tasks are easier than might have been thought. Her geographical position is such that if any powers were to risk relying on capital and its predatory interests and rose against the Russian working class and the semi-proletariat associated with it, *i.e.*, the poor peasantry—if they risked doing this, they would find it an extremely difficult task. Germany is on the brink of ruin, and since the action of America, which wants to swallow up Mexico and which any day, probably, will start a fight against Japan, the position of Germany has become hopeless: she will be destroyed. France, whose geographical position is such that she is suffering more than the others and whose state of exhaustion is reaching the limit, this country, although suffering less from starvation than Germany, has lost immeasurably greater man power than Germany. And so, if your first step would be to restrict the profits of the Russian capitalists and to deprive them of all possibility of raking in hundreds of millions in profits, if you were to propose to *all* the nations a peace directed against the capitalists of *all* countries and bluntly declare that you will not enter into any negotiations or relations with the German capitalists and with those who directly or indirectly support them or are involved with them, and that you refuse to speak with the French and British capitalists, you would be acting in such a way as to condemn them in the eyes of the workers. You would not regard it as a victory that a passport had been granted to MacDonald,* who has never waged a revolutionary struggle against capital and who is being allowed to go because he has never expressed the ideas, the principles, the practice or the experience of the revolutionary struggle against the British capitalists for the sake of which our Comrade MacLean and hundreds of other British Socialists are in prison and for the sake of which our Comrade Liebknecht is confined to a convict prison for saying, "German soldiers, turn your guns on your Kaiser!"

Would it not be more justifiable to consign the imperialist capitalists to that convict prison which the majority of the members of the Provisional Government (in the Third Duma, which has been specially revived for that purpose—incidentally, I do not know whether it is the Third or the Fourth Duma) are daily preparing and promising us, and about which new bills are already being drafted in the Ministry of Justice? MacLean and Liebknecht—those are the names of the Socialists who are putting the idea of a revolutionary struggle against imperialism into practice. That is what we must say to all the governments, if we want to fight for peace! They must be accused in the sight of the nations. You will then put all the imperialist governments in a difficult position. But now you have got yourselves in a difficult position by addressing

* The reference here is to the passports granted to "Socialists" of the Allied countries, MacDonald among them, for the purpose of attending the International "Socialist" conference at Stockholm.—*Ed.*

your Manifesto on Peace of March 14 to the people, and saying, "Overthrow your tsars, your kings and your bankers!"—while we, who possess an organization of such untold wealth of numbers, experience and material strength as the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, conclude a bloc with our bankers, institute a coalition, near-Socialist government, and draft reforms which have been drafted in Europe for decades and decades. Over there, in Europe, they laugh at such a method of fighting for peace. There they will understand only when the *Soviets take over* the power and act in a revolutionary way.

There is only one country in the world that can just now take steps to terminate the imperialist war on a class scale, *in opposition to the capitalists*, without a bloody revolution. There is only one such country, and that country is Russia. *And it will remain such as long as the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies exists. The Soviet cannot exist for long* side by side with a Provisional Government of the ordinary type. And it will remain what it is only as long as the offensive is not undertaken. *The offensive will mark a turning point in the whole policy of the* Russian revolution, that is to say, it will be a transition from a state of waiting, of preparing for peace by means of a revolutionary uprising from below, *to the resumption of the war. A transition from fraternization* on one front to fraternization on all the fronts, from spontaneous fraternization, when people exchange a crust of bread with a hungry German proletarian for a penknife under menace of penal servitude, to *conscious* fraternization—such was the path indicated.

When we take the power into our hands, we shall bridle the capitalists, and then the war will *not be the kind* of war that is being waged now—because a war is determined by the class which wages it, and not by what is written on paper. You can write what you like on paper. But as long as the capitalist class is *represented in the government* by a majority, no matter what you write, no matter how eloquent you are, no matter how many near-Socialist Ministers you have, the war will remain an imperialist war. Everybody knows that, and everybody can see it. And the case of Albania, the case of Greece and Persia, have demonstrated this so clearly and strikingly that I am astonished that everybody is attacking our written declaration (on the offensive), and not a single word is being said about concrete instances! It is easy to promise bills, but definite measures are being continually postponed. It is easy to write declarations about a peace without annexations, but the case of Albania, Greece and Persia took place *after* the coalition government was formed. Why, the *Dyelo Naroda (People's Cause)*, which is not an organ of our Party, but a government organ, a Ministerial organ, said of them that it is the Russian democracy that is being subjected to this humiliation, and that Greece is being throttled. And this very same Milyukov—whom you imagine to be God knows who, when he is only an ordinary member of his party, and Tereshchenko in no way differs from him —wrote that pressure was exerted on Greece by

the Allied diplomats. The war remains an imperialist war, and however much you may desire peace, however sincere your sympathy for the toilers, and however sincere your desire for peace—I am fully convinced that it cannot but be sincere in the majority of cases—you are impotent, because the war cannot be terminated except by the further development of the revolution. When the revolution began in Russia, there also began a revolutionary struggle for peace from below. If you took the power into your hands, if the power passed to the revolutionary organizations for the purpose of combating the Russian capitalists, then the toilers of other countries would believe you and you could propose peace. Then our peace would be ensured at least from two sides, from the side of two nations, who are shedding their blood and whose cause is hopeless—the side of Germany and the side of France. And if circumstances then obliged us to wage a revolutionary war—which nobody knows, and we do not abjure it—we would say: "We are not pacifists, we do not renounce war when the revolutionary class is in power and when it has really deprived the capitalists of the opportunity to exercise any influence on the state of affairs, on the increase of the chaos which enables them to make hundreds of millions. The revolutionary government would explain to all the nations without exception that all nations must be free, and that just as the German people dares not fight to retain Alsace-Lorraine, so the French people dares not fight for its colonies. For, if France may fight for her colonies, Russia has Khiva and Bokhara, which are also in the nature of colonies, and then the division of colonies will begin. And how are they to be divided, on what basis? According to the strength of their forces. But forces have changed, the situation of the capitalists is such that there is no solution but war. When you take over revolutionary power, you will have a revolutionary way to secure peace, namely, by issuing a revolutionary appeal to the nations and explaining your tactics by example. Then the way to securing peace by revolutionary means will open before you, and there is every likelihood that you will avert the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Then you may be certain that the German and French people will declare in your favour. And the British, American and Japanese capitalists, even if they wanted a war against the revolutionary working class—the strength of which will be multiplied tenfold when the capitalists are bridled and brushed aside and the control passes into the hands of the working class; even if the American, British and Japanese capitalists wanted a war, the chances would be a hundred to one that they would be unable to wage it. It will be enough for you to declare that you are not pacifists, that you will defend your republic, your working class, proletarian democracy, from the German, French and other capitalists, and peace will be ensured.

That is why we attributed such fundamental importance to our declaration on the offensive. The time for a thorough turning point in the history of the Russian revolution has arrived. When the Russian revolution began it was assisted by the imperialist bourgeoisie of England, which thought that

Russia was something like China or India. Instead of that, side by side with the government in which there is now a majority of landlords and capitalists, there arose the Soviets, a representative institution of unparalleled, unprecedented *strength, which you are destroying by taking part in the* coalition Cabinet of the bourgeoisie. Instead of that, the result of the Russian revolution has been that the revolutionary struggle from below against the capitalist governments is being greeted everywhere, in all countries, with far more sympathy than before. The question is: shall we advance or retreat? *It is impossible to stand still in time of revolution.* That is why the offensive will be a thorough turning point in the Russian revolution, not in the strategical sense of the offensive, but in the political and economic sense. An offensive now would mean the continuation of the imperialist slaughter and the death of hundreds of thousands, millions of people—objectively, independently, of the will or purpose of any Minister—in order to throttle Persia and other weak nations. The transfer of power to the revolutionary proletariat, supported by the poor peasantry, means a transition to a revolutionary struggle for peace in the surest and most painless forms known to mankind, a transition to a state of affairs in which the power and victory of the revolutionary workers will be ensured in Russia and all over the world. [*Applause from part of the audience.*]

Pravda Nos. 82 and 83,
June 28 and 29 [15 and 16], 1917

ON SLOGANS

Too often has it happened that, when history has taken a sharp turn, even advanced parties have been unable for a fairly long time to adapt themselves to the new situation and have continued to repeat slogans which had formerly been true, but which had now lost all meaning, having lost their meaning as "suddenly" as the sharp turn in history was "sudden."

Something of the sort may apparently repeat itself in connection with the slogan demanding the transfer of the entire power of the state to the Soviets. That slogan was correct during a period of our revolution—say from February 27 to July 4—that has now passed irrevocably. That slogan has patently ceased to be correct now. Unless this is understood, it is impossible to understand anything of the urgent questions of the day. Every particular slogan must be derived from the entire complex of specific peculiarities of a definite political situation. And the political situation in Russia now, after July 4, radically differs from the situation as it existed from February 27 to July 4.

During that, now past, period of the revolution what is known as a "dual power" prevailed in the state, which both materially and formally expressed the indefinite and transitional character of the state power. Let us not forget that the question of power is the fundamental question of every revolution.

At that time the state power was in a condition of instability. It was shared, by voluntary agreement, between the Provisional Government and the Soviets. The Soviets were delegations from the mass of free (*i.e.*, not subject to external coercion) and armed workers and soldiers. The *essence* of the matter was that the arms were in the hands of the people, and that no coercion from without was exercised over the people. That is what opened up and ensured a peaceful path for the development of the revolution. The slogan "All power must be transferred to the Soviets" was a slogan for the next step, the next directly feasible step, in this peaceful path of development. It was a slogan for a peaceful development of the revolution, which was possible between February 27 and July 4, and which was, of course, most desirable, but which is now absolutely impossible.

Apparently, not all the supporters of the slogan "All power must be transferred to the Soviets" have given adequate thought to the circumstance

that it was a slogan for a peaceful development of the revolution—peaceful *not only in the* sense that nobody, no class, no force of any importance was able then (between February 27 and July 4) to resist and prevent the transfer of power to the Soviets. That is not all. Peaceful development would then have been *possible even in the sense that the* struggle of classes and parties *within* the Soviets could have assumed a most peaceful and painless form, provided the state power in its entirety had passed to the Soviets in good time.

This aspect of the case has also not yet received adequate attention. In their class composition, the Soviets were organs of the movement of the workers and peasants, the ready-made form of their dictatorship. Had they possessed the entire state power, the main shortcoming of the petty-bourgeois strata,their chief sin, namely, confidence in the capitalists, would have been overcome in practice, would have been subjected to the criticism derived from the experience of their own measures. The substitution of classes and parties in power could have proceeded peacefully within the Soviets, based upon the sole and undivided power of the latter. The con*tact of all the Soviet parties with the masses could have remained stable* and unimpaired. One must not forget for a single moment that only such a close contact between the Soviet parties and the masses, freely growing in extent and depth, could have helped peacefully to outlive the deluded petty-bourgeois faith in compromise with the bourgeoisie. The transfer of power to the Soviets in itself would not, and could not, have changed the relation of classes; it would in no way have changed the petty-bourgeois nature of the peasantry. But it would have made a big and timely step towards severing the peasants from the bourgeoisie, towards bringing them closer to, and then uniting them with, the workers.

This is what might have happened had power passed at the proper *time* to the Soviets. That would have been the most easy, the most advantageous course for the people. Such a course would have been the least painful, and *it was therefore necessary* to fight for it most energetically. Now, however, this struggle, the struggle for the timely transfer of power to the Soviets, has ended. A peaceful course of development has been rendered impossible. A non-peaceful and most painful course has begun.

The critical change of July 4 consists precisely in the fact that the objective situation took an abrupt turn. The unstable situation in regard to the state power has come to an end; *the power at the decisive point has* passed into the hands of the counter-revolution. The development of the parties on the basis of compromise between the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties and the counter-revolutionary Cadets has brought about a situation in which both these petty-bourgeois parties have virtually become the aiders and abettors of the counter-revolutionary butchery. In the course of the development of the struggle of parties, the confidence which the petty bourgeoisie placed in the capitalists unreason-

ingly led to its supporting the counter-revolutionaries deliberately. The cycle of development of party relations is complete. On February 27, all classes were united against the monarchy. After July 4, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, working hand in glove with the monarchists and the Black-Hundreds, secured the support of the petty-bourgeois Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, partly by intimidating them, and handed over the real state power to the Cavaignacs,* the military gang, who are shooting insubordinate soldiers at the front and dealing ruthlessly with the Bolsheviks in Petrograd.

The slogan demanding the transfer of the state power to the Soviets would now sound quixotic, or a sheer mockery. This slogan would virtually be a fraud on the people; it would be fostering in them the delusion that it is enough even *now* for the Soviets merely to want to take power, or to proclaim it, in order to secure power, that there are still parties in the Soviet which have not been tainted by abetting the butchers, and that it is possible to undo the past.

It would be a profound error to think that the revolutionary proletariat is capable of "refusing" to support the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks against the counter-revolution out of "revenge," so to speak, for the support they gave in smashing the Bolsheviks, in shooting down soldiers at the front and in disarming the workers. First, this would be ascribing philistine conceptions of morality to the proletariat (since, *for the good of the cause*, the proletariat will always support not only the vacillating petty bourgeoisie but even the big bourgeoisie); and secondly—and that is the main thing—it would be a philistine attempt to obscure the real political issue by "moralizing."

And the real political issue consists in the fact that now power can no longer be secured peacefully. It can be obtained only by victory in a decisive struggle against the real holders of power at the present moment, namely, the military gang, the Cavaignacs, who are relying on the reactionary troops brought to Petrograd and on the Cadets and the monarchists.

The real issue is that these new holders of state power can be defeated only by the revolutionary masses of the people, whose movement depends not only on their being led by the proletariat, but also on their turning their backs on the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, which have betrayed the cause of the revolution.

Those who introduce philistine morals into politics reason as follows: Let us assume that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did commit an "error" in supporting the Cavaignacs, who are disarming the proletariat and the revolutionary regiments; still, they must be given a chance to

---

* *General Cavaignac*—Minister for War in the Provisional Government of the French Republic who brutally suppressed the uprising of the Paris workers in June 1848.—*Ed.*

"rectify" their "error"; it must not be "made difficult" for them to rectify their "error"; the swing of the petty bourgeoisie towards the workers must be facilitated. Such reasoning is childishly naive or simply stupid, or else a new fraud on the workers. For the swing of the petty-bourgeois masses towards the workers would mean, and could only mean, *that* these masses had turned their backs upon the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties could now rectify their "error" only by denouncing Tsereteli, Chernov, Dan and Rakitnikov as abettors of the butchers. We are wholly and unconditionally in favour of their "error" being "rectified" in this way. . .

We said that the fundamental question of revolution is the question of power. We must add that it is revolutions which at every step illustrate *how the question of where the actual power lies is befogged, and which reveal* the divergence between formal power and real power That is one of the chief characteristics of every revolutionary period. It was not clear in March and April 1917 whether the real power was in the hands of the government or in the hands of the Soviet.

Now, however, it is particularly important that the class-conscious workers should soberly face the fundamental question of revolution, namely who holds the state power at the present moment? Consider its material *manifestations, do not accept words for deeds, and you will have no difficulty* in finding the answer.

The state consists first of all of detachments of armed men with material appurtenances, such as jails, Frederick Engels wrote. Now it consists of the junkers and the reactionary Cossacks, who have been specially brought to Petrograd, it consists of those who are keeping Kamenev and the others in jail, who shut down the newspaper *Pravda*,* who disarmed the workers and a definite section of the soldiers, who are shooting down ~~an equally definite section of the soldiers, who are shooting down an equally~~ definite section of troops in the army. These butchers are the real power. Tsereteli and Chernov are Ministers without power, puppet Ministers, leaders of parties that support the butchers That is a fact. And the fact is not altered even though Tsereteli and Chernov personally, no doubt, "do not approve" of the butchery, and even though their papers timidly dissociate themselves from it Such changes of political garb change nothing in substance.

---

* *Pravda* (*Truth*)—Bolshevik daily newspaper published in St. Petersburg and founded and directed by Lenin and Stalin The first issue appeared on April 22 (May 5), 1912 It was subjected to incessant persecution by the tsarist government and suppressed several times, only to reappear under a new but similar name As from March 5, 1917, it was the organ of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party In July 1917, the *Pravda* was suppressed by the bourgeois Provisional Government but continued publication semi legally Beginning with November 9, 1917 the *Pravda* began to be issued as the organ of the Central Committee of the Russian Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks) —*Ed.*

The organ of 150,000 Petrograd voters has been suppressed; the junkers on July 6 killed the worker Voinov for carrying the *Listok Pravdy* (*Pravda Bulletin*) out of the printshop. Is this not butchery? Is this not the work of Cavaignacs? But neither the government nor the Soviets are "responsible" for this, we shall be told.

So much the worse for the government and the Soviets, we reply; for that means that they are ciphers, puppets, and that the real power is not in their hands.

First of all, and above all, the people must know the *truth*—they must know in whose hands the state power really lies. The people must be told the whole truth, namely, that the power is in the hands of a military clique of Cavaignacs (Kerensky, certain generals, officers, etc.), who are supported by the bourgeoisie as a class, headed by the Cadet Party and by all the monarchists, acting through the Black-Hundred papers, *Novoye Vremya* (*New Times*), *Zhivoye Slovo* (*Living Word*), etc., etc.

That power must be overthrown. Unless that is done, all talk of fighting counter-revolution is but empty phrasemongering, "self-deception and deception of the people."

That power now has the support both of the Ministers Tsereteli and Chernov and of their parties. We must explain to the people the butcher's role they are playing and the fact that such a *finale* for these parties was inevitable after their "errors" of April 21, May 5, June 9 and July 4 and after their approval of the policy of an offensive, a policy which nine-tenths predetermined the victory of the Cavaignacs in July.

All agitational work among the people must be reshaped so as to take account of the concrete experience of the present revolution, and particularly of the July days, *i.e.*, it must clearly point to the real enemy of the people, the military clique, the Cadets and the Black-Hundreds, and must definitely unmask the petty-bourgeois parties, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, which played and are playing the part of hangmen's assistants.

All agitational work among the people must be reshaped so as to make it clear that it is absolutely hopeless to expect that the peasants will obtain land as long as the power of the military clique has not been overthrown, and as long as the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties have not been exposed and have not forfeited the people's confidence. That would be a very long and arduous process under "normal" conditions of capitalist development, but the war and the economic chaos will tremendously accelerate the process. These are "accelerators" that may make a month or even a week equal to a year.

Two objections may perhaps be made to what has been said above: first, that to speak now of a decisive struggle is to encourage sporadic action, which would only be to the advantage of the counter-revolution; secondly, that the overthrow of the latter would still mean the transfer of power to the Soviets.

In answer to the first objection, we say the workers of Russia are already class conscious enough not to yield to provocation at a moment which is clearly unfavourable to them Nobody can deny that to take action and to offer resistance at the present moment would be aiding counter revolution Neither can it be denied that a decisive struggle will be possible only in the event of a new revolutionary upsurge among the very depths of the masses But it is not enough to speak in general of a *revolutionary* upsurge, of the rising tide of revolution, of aid by the West European workers, and so forth, we must draw a definite conclusion from our past, from our lessons *And that will lead us precisely to the slogan* demanding a decisive struggle against the counter revolution which has usurped power.

The second objection also amounts to a substitution of arguments of too general a character for concrete truths No one, no force, can overthrow the bourgeois counter revolution except the revolutionary proletariat Now, after the experience of July 1917, it is the revolutionary proletariat that must take over the state power independently Without that the victory of the revolution is *impossible* Power in the hands of the proletariat, and the support of the poor peasantry or semi proletarians for that is the only solution And we have already indicated the factors that can enormously accelerate this solution

Soviets may arise in this new revolution, and are indeed bound to arise, but *not* the present Soviets, not organs of compromise with the bourgeoisie, but organs of a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie It is true that we shall even then be in favour of building the whole state on the model of the Soviets It is not a question of Soviets in general, but of combating the *present* counter revolution and the treachery of the *present* Soviets

The substitution of the abstract for the concrete is one of the greatest and most dangerous sins in a revolution The present Soviets have failed, they have suffered complete shipwreck because they were dominated by the Socialist revolutionary and Menshevik parties At this moment these *Soviets resemble sheep led to the slaughter*, bleating pitifully under the knife The Soviets *at present* are impotent and helpless against triumphant and triumphing counter revolution The slogan demanding the transfer of *power to the Soviets might be construed* as a "simple' appeal for the transfer of power to the present Soviets, and to say that, to appeal for that, would now be to deceive the people Nothing is more dangerous than deceit

The cycle of development of the class and party struggle in Russia from February 27 to July 4 is complete A new cycle is beginning, one that involves not the old classes, *not the old parties*, not the old Soviets, but classes, parties and Soviets that have been rejuvenated in the fire of struggle, tempered, schooled and refashioned in the course of the struggle We must look forward, not backward *We must operate not* with the old,

but with the new, post-July, class and party categories. We must, at the beginning of the new cycle, proceed from the triumphant bourgeois counter-revolution, which triumphed because the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks compromised with it, and which can be vanquished only by the revolutionary proletariat. Of course, in this new cycle there will be many and various stages, both before the complete victory of the counter-revolution and the complete defeat (without a struggle) of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and before a new upsurge of a new revolution. But of this it will be possible to speak only later, as each of these stages makes its appearance. . . .

Printed in pamphle
form in 1917

LESSONS OF THE REVOLUTION

Every revolution involves a crucial change in the lives of vast masses of people Unless the time is ripe for such a change, no real revolution can take place And just as a crucial change in the life of an individual teaches him a great deal and is fraught with great experience and emotional stress, so also a revolution teaches a whole people many a rich and valuable lesson in a very short space of time

During a revolution millions and tens of millions of people learn in a week more than they do in a year of ordinary, somnolent life For during a crucial change in the life of a whole people it becomes very clear what aims the various classes of the people are pursuing, what forces they control, and what methods they use

It behooves every class conscious worker, soldier and peasant to carefully ponder over the lessons of the Russian revolution, especially now, at the end of July, when it has become clear that the first phase of our revolution has ended in failure

I

For indeed, what were the working class and peasant masses striving for when they made the revolution? What did they expect of the revolution? As we know, they expected freedom, peace, bread and land

But what do we find now?

Instead of freedom, the old despotic rule is beginning to be restored The death penalty is being introduced for the soldiers at the front Peasants are being prosecuted for the arbitrary seizure of landed estates Printing plants of workers' newspapers are being smashed Workers' newspapers are being suppressed without trial Bolsheviks are being arrested, often without any charge being preferred against them, or upon charges obviously based on calumny

It may be argued, perhaps, that the prosecution of Bolsheviks does not constitute a violation of freedom, for only definite individuals are being prosecuted and on definite charges But such an argument would be a deliberate and obvious untruth, for what justification can there be for wrecking printing presses and suppressing newspapers on account

of the crimes of individual persons, even if these charges are proved and established by court of law? It would be a different thing if the government had legally declared the whole party of the Bolsheviks, their whole trend and views to be criminal. But everybody knows that the government of free Russia could not, and did not, do anything of the kind.

What chiefly exposes the libellous character of the accusations levelled against the Bolsheviks is the fact that the newspapers of the landlords and capitalists furiously abused the Bolsheviks for their opposition to the war and to the landlords and capitalists, and openly demanded the arrest and prosecution of the Bolsheviks even at a time when not a single charge had been trumped up against a single Bolshevik. The people want peace. But the revolutionary government of free Russia has again started a war of conquest on the basis of those secret treaties which the ex-tsar Nicholas II concluded with the British and French capitalists in order that the Russian capitalists might plunder other nations. These secret treaties have remained unpublished to this day. The government of free Russia resorted to subterfuges, and to this day has not proposed a just peace to all the nations.

There is no bread. Famine is again approaching. Everybody can see that the capitalists and the rich are unscrupulously cheating the treasury in the matter of military supplies (the war is now costing the nation fifty million rubles daily), that they are raking in fabulous profits as a result of high prices, while nothing whatever is being done to establish rigid control over the production of goods and their distribution to the workers. The capitalists are becoming more brazen every day; they are throwing workers on to the streets, and this at a time when the people suffer scarcity. A vast majority of the peasants, at congress after congress, have loudly and clearly proclaimed that landlord proprietorship is an injustice and robbery. Yet a government which calls itself revolutionary and democratic has been leading peasants by the nose for months and deceiving them by promises and delays. For months the capitalists did not allow Minister Chernov to issue a law prohibiting the purchase and sale of land. And when finally this law was passed, the capitalists started an infamous campaign of vilification against Chernov, which they are continuing to the present day. The government has become so brazen in its defence of the landlords that it is beginning to bring peasants to trial for "unauthorized" seizure of land.

They are leading the peasants by the nose, persuading them to wait for the Constituent Assembly. But the convocation of the Assembly is being steadily postponed by the capitalists. Now that, owing to the pressure of the Bolsheviks, the date of its convocation has been set for September 30, the capitalists are openly clamouring that this is "impossibly" short notice, and are demanding the postponement of the Constituent Assembly. . . . The most influential members of the capitalist and landlord party, the "Cadet," or "National Freedom" Party, such as

Panina, are openly advocating that *the convocation of the Constituent Assembly be postponed until the end of the war.*

As to the land, wait until the Constituent Assembly. As to the Constituent Assembly, wait until the end of the war. As to the end of the war, wait until a complete victory is won. That is what it comes to. The capitalists and landlords, having a majority in the government, are simply mocking at the peasants.

II

But how could this have happened in a free country, after the overthrow of the tsarist regime?

In a country that is not free, the people are ruled by a tsar and a handful of landlords, capitalists and bureaucrats who are not elected by anybody.

In a free country, the people are ruled *only by those who have been* elected for that purpose by the people themselves. At the elections people are divided into parties, and as a rule each class of the population forms its own party for instance, the landlords, the capitalists, the peasants and the workers each form their own party Hence, in free countries the people are ruled by means of an open struggle of parties and by free agreement between these parties.

For a period of about four months after the overthrow of the tsarist regime on February 27, 1917, Russia was ruled as a free country, *i.e.*, by means of an open struggle of freely formed parties and by free agreement between these parties. Hence, to understand the development of the Russian revolution, it is above all necessary to study what were the *chief parties, what class interests they defended, and what were the relations* of all these parties to each other.

III

After the overthrow of the tsarist regime the state power passed into the hands of the first Provisional Government. It consisted of representatives of the bourgeoisie, *i e.*, the capitalists, joined by the landlords. The "Cadet" Party, the chief capitalist party, held prime place as the ruling and government party of the bourgeoisie.

It was not by chance that this party secured power, although it was *not* the capitalists, of course, but the workers and peasants, the soldiers and sailors, who fought the tsarist troops and shed their blood for freedom. Power was secured by the party of the capitalists because that class possessed the advantage of wealth, organization and knowledge. Since 1905, and particularly during the war, the class of the capitalists and the landlords *associated with* the capitalists in Russia made its greatest progress in the matter of its own organization.

The Cadet Party had always been monarchist, it was so both in 1905 and from 1905 to 1917. After the victory of the people over the tsarist tyranny that party proclaimed itself a republican party. The experience of history shows that when the people triumph over a monarchy, capitalist parties are always ready to become republican in order the better to defend the privileges of the capitalists and their supremacy over the people.

The Cadet Party pays lip-service to "national freedom." But actually it stands for the capitalists, and it was immediately backed by all the landlords, monarchists, and Black-Hundreds. The press and the elections are proof of this. After the revolution, all the bourgeois papers and the whole Black-Hundred press began to sing in unison with the Cadets. Not daring to come out openly, all the monarchist parties supported the Cadet Party at the elections, for example, in Petrograd.

Having obtained state power, the Cadets bent every effort to continue the predatory war of conquest begun by Tsar Nicholas II, who had concluded secret predatory treaties with the British and French capitalists. By these treaties the Russian capitalists were promised, in the event of victory, the seizure of Constantinople, Galicia, Armenia, etc. As to the people, the government of the Cadets put them off with idle subterfuges and promises, deferring the decision of all matters of vital and essential interest to the workers and peasants until the Constituent Assembly, without appointing the date of its convocation.

Making use of their freedom, the people began to organize independently. The chief organization of the workers and peasants, who form the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, was the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. These Soviets already began to be formed at the time of the February Revolution, and within a few weeks all class-conscious and advanced members of the working class and the peasantry were united in Soviets in most of the larger cities of Russia and in many rural districts.

The Soviets were elected in an absolutely free way. They were genuine organizations of the masses of the people, the workers and peasants. They were genuine organizations of the vast majority of the people. The workers and peasants, clad in soldier's uniform, were armed.

It goes without saying that the Soviets could and should have taken over the entire power of the state. Pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly there should have been no other power in the state but the Soviets. Only then could our revolution have become really a people's revolution, really a democratic revolution. Only then could the toiling masses, who are really striving for peace, and who really have no interest in a war of conquest, have begun firmly and decidedly to carry out a policy which would have put an end to the war of conquest and would have led to peace. Only then could the workers and peasants have bridled the capitalists, who are making vast profits "on the war" and who have reduced the

country to a state of ruin and starvation But in the Soviets only a minority of the deputies were on the side of the party of the revolutionary workers, the Bolshevik Social Democrats, who demanded that the whole state power should be transferred to the Soviets The majority of the deputies in the Soviets were on the side of the parties of the Menshevik Social Democrats and the Socialist Revolutionaries, who were opposed to the transfer of power to the Soviets Instead of removing the government of the bourgeoisie and replacing it by a government of the Soviets, these parties insisted on supporting the government of the bourgeoisie, compromising with it and forming a joint government with it This policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie pursued by the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, who enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the people forms the main feature of the course of the revolution during the five months since its outbreak

IV

Let us first see how the compromising of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie proceeded, and then let us seek an explanation of the fact that the majority of the people trusted them

The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries compromised with the capitalists in one form or another at every period of the Russian revolution.

At the very end of February 1917, as soon as the people had triumphed and the tsarist regime had been overthrown, the capitalist Provisional Government admitted Kerensky to its number as a 'Socialist " As a matter of fact, Kerensky had never been a Socialist, he had only been a Trudovik, and had joined the 'Socialist Revolutionaries' only in March 1917, when it had already become both safe and profitable to do so Through Kerensky, as vice chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, the capitalist Provisional Government immediately set about gaining sway over and taming the Soviet The Soviet, i e , the Socialist Revolutionaries and *Mensheviks who predominated in it, allowed itself to be tamed*, agreeing immediately after the formation of the capitalist Provisional Government to 'support it"—' to the extent that" it carried out its promises

The Soviet regarded itself as *a body for exercising supervision and control* over the actions of the Provisional Government The leaders of the Soviet established what was known as a Contact Commission to keep in touch with the government Within this Contact Commission the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Soviet conducted continuous negotiations with the capitalist government, being in a way Ministers without portfolios, unofficial Ministers

This state of affairs continued during the whole of March and almost the whole of April The capitalists resorted to delays and subterfuges, seeking to gain time Not a single step of any importance to develop the revolu

tion was taken by the capitalist government during this period. It did absolutely nothing in furtherance even of its direct and immediate task, the convocation of the Constituent Assembly; it did not submit the question to the localities or even set up a central commission to handle the preparations. The government was occupied with only one thing, namely, surreptitiously renewing the predatory international treaties concluded by the tsar with the capitalists of Great Britain and France, cautiously and unostentatiously thwarting the revolution and promising everything without performing anything. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the "Contact Commission" acted like simpletons who are fed on grandiloquent phrases, promises and hopes. Like the crow in the fable, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks succumbed to flattery and listened with satisfaction to the assurances of the capitalists that they valued the Soviets highly and would not take a single step without them.

Actually, time passed and the capitalist government did absolutely nothing for the revolution. On the contrary, it managed during this period, in detriment to the revolution, to renew the secret predatory treaties, or, rather, to confirm them and "vitalize" them by supplementary and no less secret negotiations with the diplomats of Anglo-French imperialism. It managed during this period, in detriment to the revolution, to lay the foundations of a counter-revolutionary organization of (or at least of closer contacts among) the generals and officers in the army on active service. In detriment to the revolution, it managed to start the organization of industrialists, manufacturers and millowners, who, under the onslaught of the workers, were compelled to make concession after concession, but who at the same time began to sabotage (damage) production and to prepare to bring it to a standstill at a favourable moment.

However, the organization of the advanced workers and peasants under the Soviets made steady progress. The best representatives of the oppressed classes felt that, notwithstanding the agreement between the government and the Petrograd Soviet, notwithstanding the magniloquence of Kerensky, notwithstanding the "Contact Commission," the government was an enemy of the people, an enemy of the revolution. The masses felt that unless the resistance of the capitalists were broken, the cause of peace, the cause of freedom, the cause of the revolution would inevitably be lost. The impatience and bitterness of the masses grew.

V

It took an open form on April 20-21. The movement flared up spontaneously; nobody prepared the way for it. The movement was so definitely directed against the government that one regiment rose in arms and appeared at the Mariinsky Palace to arrest the Ministers. It became obvious to everybody that the government could not remain in power. The Soviets

could (and should) have taken over power without meeting the least resistance from any quarter. Instead, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks supported the collapsing capitalist government, entangled themselves *still further in* compromises with *it* and adopted measures that were still more fatal to the revolution.

Revolution enlightens *all* classes with a rapidity and thoroughness unknown in normal, peaceful times. The capitalists, better organized and more experienced than anybody else in the affairs of the class struggle and politics, learnt their lessons faster than the others. Perceiving that the position of the government was untenable, they resorted to a method which for many decades, ever since 1848, has been practised by the capitalists of other countries in order to fool, divide and weaken the workers. This method is what is known as a "coalition" government, *i.e.*, a joint Cabinet of members of the bourgeoisie and renegades from Socialism.

In the countries where freedom and democracy have longest existed side by side with a revolutionary labour movement, in Great Britain and France, the capitalists have frequently and successfully resorted to this method. When they enter a bourgeois Cabinet, the "Socialist" leaders invariably prove to be pawns, puppets, screens for the capitalists, instruments for deceiving the workers. The "democratic and republican" capitalists of Russia resorted to this method. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks let themselves be fooled at once, and the "coalition" Cabinet, joined by Chernov, Tsereteli and Co., became a fact on May 6.

The simpletons of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties were jubilant and bathed self-admiringly in the rays of the Ministerial glory of their leaders. The capitalists gleefully rubbed their hands at having found coadjutors against the people in the shape of the "leaders of the Soviets" and at having secured the promise of the latter to support "offensive actions at the front," *i. e.*, a renewal of the imperialist predatory war, which for a while had come to a standstill. The capitalists were well aware of the puffed-up impotence of these leaders, they knew that the promises of the bourgeoisie—regarding control over production, and even the organization of production, regarding a policy of peace, and so forth—would never be fulfilled.

And so it turned out. The second phase in the development of the revolution, May 6 to June 9 or June 18, fully corroborated the expectations of the capitalists as to the ease with which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks could be fooled.

While Peshekhonov and Skobelev were deceiving themselves and the people with florid speeches to the effect that one hundred per cent of the profits of the capitalists would be taken away from them, that their "resistance was broken," and so forth, the capitalists continued to consolidate their position. Nothing, absolutely nothing, was undertaken during this period to curb the capitalists. The Minister renegades from Socialism were mere talking machines for distracting the attention of the oppressed

classes, while the entire apparatus of state administration actually remained in the hands of the bureaucracy (the government officials) and the bourgeoisie. The notorious Palchinsky, Vice-Minister of Industry, was a typical representative of that apparatus, blocking every measure aimed at the capitalists. The Ministers prated, but everything remained as of old.

The bourgeoisie used Minister Tsereteli in particular to fight the revolution. He was sent to "calm" Kronstadt when the local revolutionaries had the audacity to remove an appointed Commissar. The bourgeoisie launched in its newspapers an incredibly vociferous, violent and vicious campaign of lies, calumny and vituperation against Kronstadt, accusing it of desiring "defection from Russia," repeating this and similar absurdities in a thousand different modifications in order to terrify the petty bourgeoisie and the philistines. A most typical representative of the stupid and frightened philistines, Tsereteli, was most "conscientious" of all in swallowing the bait of bourgeois calumny; he was the most zealous of all in "fulminating against and subduing" Kronstadt, without realizing that he was playing the role of lackey of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. He turned out to be the instrument of the "compromise" arrived at with revolutionary Kronstadt, whereby the Commissar for Kronstadt is not simply appointed by the government, but is elected locally and *confirmed* by the government. It was on such miserable compromises that the Ministers who had fled from Socialism to the bourgeoisie wasted their time.

Wherever a bourgeois Minister could not appear in defence of the government, before the revolutionary workers or in the Soviets, a "Socialist" Minister—Skobelev, or Tsereteli, or Chernov—appeared (or, more correctly, was sent by the bourgeoisie) and faithfully performed the work of the bourgeoisie; he would do his level best to defend the Cabinet, whitewash the capitalists and fool the people by making promise after promise and by counselling them to wait, wait, wait.

Minister Chernov was particularly engaged in bargaining with his bourgeois colleagues; down to July, down to the new "crisis of power" which began after the movement of July 3-4, down to the resignation of the Cadets from the Cabinet, Minister Chernov was continuously engaged in the useful and interesting work, so beneficial to the people, of "persuading" his bourgeois colleagues, counselling them to agree at least to the prohibition of the purchase and sale of land. Such a prohibition had been most solemnly promised to the peasants at the All-Russian Congress (Soviet) of Peasants' Deputies in Petrograd. But the promise remained a mere promise. Chernov proved unable to fulfil it either in May or in June, until the revolutionary tide, the spontaneous outbreak of July 3-4, which coincided with the resignation of the Cadets from the Cabinet, made it possible to enact this measure. But even so it was an isolated measure, incapable of producing any palpable improvement in the struggle of the peasantry against the landlords for land.

Meanwhile, at the front, the counter-revolutionary, imperialist task of renewing the imperialist, predatory war, a task which Guchkov, so hated by the people, had been unable to perform, was being performed successfully and brilliantly by the "revolutionary democrat" Kerensky, that new-baked member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. He was intoxicated by his own eloquence, incense was burned to him by the imperialists, who used him as a pawn; he was flattered, he was worshipped—all because he served the capitalists religiously, persuading the "revolutionary troops" to agree to renew the war which was being waged in pursuance of the treaties concluded by Tsar Nicholas II with the capitalists of Great Britain and France, a war waged in order that the Russian capitalists might secure Constantinople, Lvov, Erzerum and Trebizond.

Thus passed the second phase of the Russian revolution—May 6 to June 9. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie grew in strength, consolidated itself, and, shielded and defended by the "Socialist" Ministers, prepared to launch an offensive both against the external enemy and against the internal enemy, *i.e.*, the revolutionary workers.

VI

On June 9, the party of the revolutionary workers, the Bolsheviks, was preparing for a demonstration in Petrograd with the purpose of giving organized expression to the steadily growing discontent and indignation of the masses. The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, entangled in compromises with the bourgeoisie and bound by the imperialist policy of an offensive, were horrified, feeling that they were losing their hold over the masses. A general howl was raised against the demonstration, and in this howl the counter-revolutionary Cadets were this time joined by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Under their direction, and as a result of their policy of compromise with the capitalists, the swing-over of the petty-bourgeois masses to an alliance with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie became quite definite and strikingly obvious. Therein lies the historical significance and class meaning of the crisis of June 9.

[illegible] wish to lead the wor[illegible] united Cadets, Soc[illegible]r, in order to retain at least a remnant of the confidence of the masses, were compelled to call a general demonstration for June 18. The bourgeoisie was beside itself with rage, rightly discerning in this a swing of the petty-bourgeois democracy towards the proletariat, and it decided to paralyse the action of the democracy by an offensive at the front.

Actually, June 18 was marked by an imposing victory for the slogans of the revolutionary proletariat, the slogans of Bolshevism, among the

Petrograd masses. And on June 19 the bourgeoisie and the Bonapartist* Kerensky solemnly announced that the offensive at the front had really begun on June 18.

The offensive meant in fact the resumption of the predatory war in the interests of the capitalists and against the wishes of the vast majority of the toilers. That is why the offensive was inevitably accompanied, on the one hand, by a gigantic growth of chauvinism and the transfer of the military power (and consequently of the state power) to the military clique of Bonapartists and, on the other, by the adoption of force against the masses, the persecution of the internationalists, the abolition of freedom of agitation, and the arrest and shooting of those who are opposed to the war.

May 6 bound the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to the triumphal chariot of the bourgeoisie with a rope; June 19 shackled them, as servants of the capitalists, with a chain.

VII

Owing to the renewal of the predatory war, the bitterness of the masses naturally grew more rapidly and intensely. July 3-4 witnessed an outburst of indignation, which the Bolsheviks attempted to restrain, but to which, of course, they had to endeavour to lend the most organized form possible.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, being slaves of the bourgeoisie and enchained by their master, agreed to everything: they agreed to the dispatch of reactionary troops to Petrograd, to the restoration of the death penalty, to the disarming of the workers and the revolutionary troops, to arrests and prosecutions and to the suppression of newspapers without trial. The power which the bourgeoisie in the government were unable to secure entirely, and which the Soviets did not want to secure, fell into the hands of the military clique, the Bonapartists, who, of course, were wholly supported by the Cadets and the Black-Hundreds, by the landlords and capitalists.

And so down and down, from step to step. Having once set foot on the inclined plane of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks slid irresistibly to the bottom. On February 28, in the Petrograd Soviet, they promised conditional support to the bourgeois government. On May 6 they saved it from collapse and allowed themselves to be made its servants and defenders by agreeing to the offensive. On June 9 they united with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in a campaign of furious rage, lies and calumnies against the revolutionary

* *Bonapartism* (from the name of the two French emperors, Bonaparte)—an epithet applied to a government which endeavours to appear non-partisan by taking advantage of a highly acute struggle between the parties of the capitalists and the workers. Actually serving the capitalists, such a government dupes the workers most of all by promises and petty doles.

proletariat On June 19 they approved the resumption of the predatory war, which had already begun On July 3 they consented *to the summoning* of reactionary troops, which was the beginning of their complete surrender of power to the Bonapartists Down and down, step by step

This shameful *finale* of the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties is not fortuitous but is a consequence of the economic status of the small proprietors, the petty bourgeoisie, as has been repeatedly borne out by the experience of Europe

VIII

Everybody, of course, has observed how the small proprietor bends every effort and strains every nerve to "get on in the world,' to become a real master, to rise to the position of a big employer, a real bourgeois As long as capitalism rules, there is no other alternative for the small proprietor except himself to become a capitalist (and that is possible at best in the case of one small proprietor out of a hundred), or to become a ruined man, a semi proletarian, and ultimately a proletarian The same is true in politics the petty bourgeois democracy, especially its leaders, tends to follow the bourgeoisie The leaders of the petty bourgeois democracy console their masses with promises and assurances as to the possibility of reaching agreement with the big capitalists, at best, and for a very brief period, they obtain from the capitalists certain small concessions for a *small upper stratum of the toiling masses, but on every decisive question*, in every important matter, the petty bourgeois democracy always follows in the wake of the bourgeoisie, as a feeble appendage to it, an obedient tool in the hands of the financial kings The experience of Great Britain and France has proved this over and over again

The experience of the Russian revolution from February to July *1917*, when events developed with unusual rapidity, particularly under the influence of the imperialist war and the profound crisis arising therefrom, has most strikingly and palpably confirmed the old Marxist truth that the position of the petty bourgeoisie is an unstable one

The lesson of the Russian revolution is that there can be no escape for the toiling masses from the iron grip of war, famine and enslavement to the landlords and capitalists, unless they completely break with the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties and clearly recognize their treacherous role, unless they renounce all compromise with the bourgeoisie and resolutely come over to the side of the revolutionary workers Only the revolutionary workers, if they are supported by the poor peasants, are capable of smashing the resistance of the capitalists and leading the people to win the land without compensation, to complete freedom, to salvation from famine and war, and to a just and lasting peace

POSTSCRIPT

This article, as is apparent from the text, was written at the end of July.

The history of the revolution during the month of August has fully corroborated what was said in this article. Then, at the end of August, the revolt of Kornilov * caused a new turn in the revolution by clearly demonstrating to the people that the Cadets, in alliance with the counter-revolutionary generals, are striving to disperse the Soviets and to restore the monarchy. How strong this new turn of the revolution is, and whether it will succeed in putting an end to the fatal policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie, the near future will show. . . .

September 6, 1917

Published in the
Rabochy (*Worker*) Nos. 8 and 9,
September 12 and 13
[August 30 and 31], 1917

Printed in pamphlet form
at the beginning of October 1917
with Postscript dated September 19 [6]

* *The revolt of Kornilov*—the counter-revolutionary venture in August-September 1917 undertaken by General Kornilov to crush the revolution, abolish the Soviets and set up a military dictatorship. It was only due to the energetic measures of the Bolshevik Party, which headed the armed resistance to the counter-revolution, that the Kornilov revolt was crushed.—*Ed.*

THE IMPENDING CATASTROPHE AND HOW TO COMBAT IT

FAMINE IS APPROACHING

Russia is facing inevitable catastrophe The railways are incredibly disorganized and the disorganization is progressing The railways will come to a standstill The transport of raw materials and coal to the factories will cease So will the transport of grain The capitalists are deliberately and consistently sabotaging (damaging, stopping, disrupting, hampering) production, hoping that a terrible catastrophe will spell the collapse of the republic and democracy, of the Soviets and the proletarian and peasants' unions generally, thus facilitating the return to a monarchy and the restoration of the full power of the bourgeoisie and landlords

We are being threatened with a catastrophe of unprecedented dimensions and with famine All the newspapers have already spoken of this innumerable times An incredible number of resolutions have been adopted by the parties and the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies—resolutions which admit that a catastrophe is unavoidable, that it is very close, that desperate measures are required to combat it, that "heroic efforts" by the people are required to avert ruin, and so on

Everybody says this Everybody admits it Everybody has decided that it is so

But nothing is being done

Half a year has elapsed since the revolution The catastrophe has become still more imminent We have reached the pass of mass unemployment Just think of it there is scarcity in the country, the country is perishing from a shortage of goods, from a shortage of labour, while there is a sufficient quantity of grain and raw materials—yet in such a country, at such a critical moment, mass unemployment has arisen! What better evidence is required to show that after six months of revolution (which some call a great revolution, but which so far it would perhaps be fairer to call a rotten revolution), in a democratic republic, with an abundance of unions, organs and institutions which proudly call themselves "revolutionary-democratic," absolutely *nothing* of importance has actually been done to avert catastrophe, to avert famine? We are approaching bankruptcy

with increasing speed; for the war will not wait and is causing increasing havoc in every sphere of national life.

Yet the slightest attention and thought will convince us that the means of combating catastrophe and famine are available, that the measures required to combat them are quite clear, simple, absolutely feasible, and fully within the scope of the national forces, and that these measures are *not* being adopted *only* because, *exclusively* because their adoption would affect the fabulous profits of a handful of landlords and capitalists.

And, in fact, we can guarantee that you will not find a single speech, a single article in a newspaper of any trend, a single resolution of any meeting or institution where the chief and principal measure of combating, of preventing catastrophe and famine is not quite clearly and definitely recognized. This measure is control, supervision, accountancy, regulation by the state, establishment of a proper distribution of labour power in the production and distribution of goods, husbanding of the national forces, elimination of every superfluous expenditure of forces, their economy. Control, supervision and accountancy—these are the prime requisites for combating catastrophe and famine. That is indisputable and generally recognized. And that is just what *is not being done* from fear of encroaching on the supremacy of the landlords and capitalists, on their immense, unheard-of and scandalous profits, profits derived from high prices and war contracts (and, directly or indirectly, nearly everybody is now "working" for the war), profits about which everybody knows and which everybody sees, and over which everybody is sighing and groaning.

And absolutely nothing is being done by the government to introduce the slightest effective control, accountancy and supervision.

COMPLETE INACTIVITY OF THE GOVERNMENT

There is a universal, systematic and persistent sabotage of every kind of control, supervision and accountancy and of all government attempts to institute them. And one must be incredibly naive not to understand, one must be an utter hypocrite to pretend not to understand, where this sabotage comes from and by what means it is being carried on. For this sabotage by the bankers and capitalists, this *frustration* of every kind of control, supervision and accountancy, is being adapted to the state forms of a democratic republic, is being adapted to the existence of "revolutionary-democratic" institutions. The capitalist gentlemen have realized perfectly the truth which all believers in scientific Socialism recognize in word, but which the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to forget as soon as their friends secured jobs as Ministers, Assistant Ministers, etc. This truth is that the economic nature of capitalist exploi-

tation is in no wise affected by the substitution of republican-democratic forms of government *for monarchist forms, and that, vice versa*—only the *form* of the struggle for the inviolability and sacredness of capitalist profits need be changed *in order to preserve them under a democratic republic* just as effectively as under an absolute monarchy.

The present, latest republican democratic *sabotage of every kind of* control, accountancy and supervision consists in the fact that the capitalists "warmly" accept the "principle" *of control and the necessity for* control in word (as, it need hardly be said, do all the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), but only insist that this control *should be introduced* "gradually," systematically and in a "state regulated" way. In practice, however, these plausible words serve to conceal the *frustration* of control, its nullification, its reduction to a fiction, the mere playing at control, the *postponement of all effective practical measures, the creation* of extraordinarily complicated, clumsy and bureaucratically lifeless institutions of control which are thoroughly dependent on the capitalists, and which do, and can do, absolutely nothing.

To bear out what we have said, let us cite witnesses from among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, *i e* , the very people who had the majority in the Soviets during the first six months of the revolution, who took part in the "coalition government" and who are therefore politically responsible to the Russian workers and peasants for abetting the capitalists and for the frustration of control by the capitalists.

The *Izvestia of the C. E. C.* (*i e* , of the Central Executive Committee of the All Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies), the official organ of the highest of the so-called "authoritative" (so they say!) organs of the "revolutionary" democracy, *in* its issue of September 7, 1917, No. 164, prints a *resolution* passed by a special institution on questions *of control created and controlled by these very* Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries This special institution is the *"Economic Section" of the* Central Executive Committee. In its resolution it officially records as a fact *"the complete inactivity of the central bodies set up under the government for the regulation of economic life."*

Can one imagine any more eloquent testimony to the collapse of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary policy than this statement signed by the hands of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves?

The need for the regulation of economic life was already recognized under tsardom, and certain institutions were set up for the purpose. But under tsardom economic chaos steadily grew and reached monstrous proportions. It was at once admitted that it was the task of the republican, revolutionary government to adopt earnest and resolute *measures to put an* end to the economic chaos. When the "coalition" government with the Mensheviks and *Socialist-Revolutionaries was formed*, it *promised* and undertook in its most solemn public declaration of May 6 to establish state

control and regulation. The Tseretelis and Chernovs, like all the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders, vowed and swore that not only were they responsible for the government, but that the "authoritative organs of revolutionary democracy" under their control would in fact keep an eye on the government and supervise its actions.

Four months have elapsed since May 6, four long months, during which Russia has sacrificed the lives of hundreds of thousands of soldiers for the sake of the stupid imperialist "offensive," during which chaos and disaster have been advancing at seven-league strides, during which exceptional opportunity was afforded by the summer season to do a great deal in the matter of water transport, agriculture, prospecting for minerals, and so on and so forth—and after the lapse of four months the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are obliged officially to admit the "complete inactivity" of the institutions of control set up under the government!!

And these Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, with the mien of serious statesmen, now prate (we are writing on the eve of the Democratic Conference* of September 12) that matters can be furthered by replacing the coalition with the Cadets by a coalition with commercial and industrial Kit Kityches** like Ryabushinsky, Bublikov, Tereshchenko and Co.

One asks, how are we to explain this astonishing blindness of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries? Are we to regard them as political infants who, because of their extreme foolishness and naiveté, do not realize what they are about and have honestly gone astray? Or does the abundance of posts they occupy as Ministers, Assistant Ministers, Governors-General, Commissars and the like possess the power of engendering a special kind of "political" blindness?

THE MEASURES OF CONTROL ARE GENERALLY KNOWN AND EASY TO PUT INTO EFFECT

It might be asked, are not the ways and means of control extremely complex, difficult, untried and even unknown? Is not the delay due to the fact that although the statesmen of the Cadet Party, the merchant and industrial class, and the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties have

* *Democratic Conference*—the reference here is to the so-called All-Russian Democratic Conference convened by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in September 1917 and consisting of representatives of the Socialist parties, the compromising Soviets, trade unions and several other organizations. The Conference set up a Provisional Council of the Republic, known as the Pre-parliament. The convening of the Democratic Conference was a hopeless attempt to divert the country from the path of a Soviet revolution to the path of bourgeois parliamentarism, an attempt to turn back the wheel of revolution.—*Ed.*

** *Kit Kityches*—commercial and industrial big wigs. Kit Kitych, a character in a play by the classic Russian playwright, Ostrovsky. It personifies a rich, wilful and ignorant man who rules despotically over his family and his subordinates.—*Ed.*

already for six months been toiling in the sweat of their brows, investigating, studying and searching for ways and means of control, the problem is an incredibly difficult one and has not yet been solved?

Alas, by presenting matters in this light, they are trying to fool the ignorant, illiterate and downtrodden muzhiks and the good citizens who believe everything and never peer below the surface. But as a matter of fact even tsardom, even the "old regime," when it set up the War Industry Committees, *knew* the principal measure, the chief ways and means to introduce control, namely, by uniting the population according to profession, purpose of work, branch of labour, etc. But tsardom *feared* the union of the population and therefore tried in every way to limit and artificially hinder this generally known, very easy and quite practical method and means of control.

All the belligerent countries, suffering as they do from the extreme burdens and hardships of the war, suffering—in one degree or another—from economic chaos and starvation, have long ago outlined, defined, applied and tested a *whole series* of measures of control, consisting in nearly every case in uniting the population and in creating or fostering unions of various kinds, in which representatives of the government participate, which are under the supervision of the government, etc. All these measures of control are generally known, much has been said and written about them, and the laws passed by the advanced belligerent countries relating to control have been translated into Russian or explained in detail in the Russian press.

If our government really *wanted* to introduce control in a businesslike and earnest fashion, if its institutions had not condemned themselves by their servility to the capitalists to "complete inactivity," all the government would have to do would be to draw largely on the rich store of measures of control which are already known and already being put into effect. The only obstacle to this—an obstacle concealed from the people by the Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks—was, and still is, that control would bring to light the fabulous profits of the capitalists and would cut the ground from under these profits.

In order the more vividly to illustrate this most important question (a question which is *essentially equivalent to* that of the program of *any* truly revolutionary government that wanted to save Russia from war and famine), let us enumerate these principal measures of control and examine each of them separately.

We shall see that all a government, a government that is not called a revolutionary-democratic government merely in joke, would have had to do was to have decreed (ordered, commanded), in the very first week of its existence, that the principal measures of control should be carried into effect, imposed strict and severe punishment on capitalists who fraudulently evaded control, and called upon the population itself to exercise supervision over the capitalists and to see to it that they scrupulously ob-

served the regulations on control—and control would have been established in Russia long ago.

These principal measures are as follows:

1) Amalgamation of all the banks into a single bank and state control over its operations, or the nationalization of the banks.

2) The nationalization of the syndicates, *i.e.*, the big, monopolistic capitalist amalgamations (the Sugar Syndicate, the Oil Syndicate, the Coal Syndicate, the Iron and Steel Syndicate, etc.).

3) Abolition of commercial secrecy.

4) Compulsory trustification (*i.e.*, compulsory amalgamation) of industrialists, merchants and proprietors generally.

5) Compulsory union of the population in consumers' societies, or the encouragement of such union, and the exercise of control over it.

Let us examine what would be the significance of each of these measures if carried out in a revolutionary-democratic way.

NATIONALIZATION OF THE BANKS

The banks, as we know, are the ganglions of modern economic life, the principal nerve centres of the whole capitalist economic system. To talk about "regulating economic life" and at the same time to evade the question of the nationalization of the banks is either to betray the most profound ignorance or to deceive the "common people" by florid words and grandiloquent promises with the deliberate intention of not fulfilling these promises.

It is utterly absurd to control and regulate deliveries of grain, or the production and distribution of goods generally, without controlling and regulating bank operations. It is like trying to save chance farthings and closing one's eyes to millions. Banks nowadays are so closely and intimately bound up with trade (in grain and everything else) and with industry that without "laying hands" on the banks nothing of any value, nothing "revolutionary-democratic" can be done.

But perhaps for the state to "lay hands" on the banks is a very difficult and complex operation? They usually try to scare the philistines with this idea—that is to say, the capitalists and their defenders try to, because it is to their advantage to do so.

But, as a matter of fact, the nationalization of the banks, which would not deprive a single "owner" of a single farthing, presents absolutely no technical or cultural difficulties whatsoever, and is being delayed *exclusively* because of the vile greed of an insignificant handful of rich men. If the nationalization of the banks is so often confused with the confiscation of private property, it is the bourgeois press, whose interest it is to deceive the public, that is responsible for the dissemination of this confusion of ideas.

bureaucratic means, whereas we are speaking here of revolutionary demo cratic means

This "little difference" is of essential importance It is "not the cus tom" to pay attention to it as a rule The term "revolutionary democracy' has become with us (especially among the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks) almost a conventional phrase, like the expression 'Thank God!"—which is used by people who are not so ignorant as to believe in God, or like the expression "respected citizen"—which is sometimes used even in addressing members of the staff of the *Den* (*Day*) or the *Ye dinstvo*, although nearly everybody guesses that these newspapers have been founded and are maintained by the *capitalists in the interests* of the capitalists, and that there is therefore nothing very "respectable" in the collaboration of supposed Socialists on these newspapers

If we do not employ the words "revolutionary democracy" as a stereo typed and ceremonial phrase, as a conventional epithet, but *reflect* on their significance, we shall find that being a democrat in fact means being concerned for the interests of the majority of the people and not the minor ity, and that being a revolutionary means destroying everything perni cious and obsolete *in the most resolute and ruthless fashion*

Neither in America nor in Germany, as far as we know, is any claim laid by either the government or the ruling classes to the title "revolution ary democracy," to which claim is laid by our Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks (and which they prostitute) In Germany there are only *four* very large private banks of nation wide importance, in America there are only *two* It is easier, more convenient, more advantageous for the financial kings of these banks to unite privately, surreptitiously, in a reactionary and not a revolutionary way, in a bureaucratic and not a dem ocratic way, by bribing state officials (this is the general rule in America *and in Germany*), and by preserving the private character of the banks just in order to preserve secrecy of operations, just in order to mulct the state of millions and millions in "super profits," and just in order to protect fraudulent financial manipulations

Both America and Germany "regulate economic life" in such a way as to create conditions of *military servitude* for the workers (and partly for the peasants) and a *paradise for the bankers and capitalists* Their regulation consists in the fact that the workers are "squeezed" to the point of star vation, while the capitalists are guaranteed (surreptitiously, in a reaction ary bureaucratic way) profits *higher* than they earned before the war

Such a course is quite possible in republican imperialist Russia too, it is indeed the course that has been followed not only by the Milyukovs and Shingaryovs, but also by Kerensky in partnership with Tereshchenko, Ne krasov, Bernatsky, Prokopovich and Co , who *also protect* the reactionary-bureaucratic "inviolability' of the banks and their sacred right to immense profits Let us better tell the *truth*, namely, that in republican Russia they want to regulate economic life in a reactionary bureaucratic way, but

"often" hesitate to do so owing to the existence of the "Soviets," which Kornilov No. 1 did not manage to disperse, but which Kornilov No. 2 will try to disperse. . . .

That would be the truth. And this simple but bitter truth is more useful for the education of the people than the honeyed lies about "our" "great" "revolutionary" democracy. . . .

* * *

The nationalization of the banks would at the same time greatly facilitate the nationalization of the insurance business, *i.e.*, the amalgamation of all the insurance companies into one, the centralization of their operations, and the control over them by the state. Here, too, congresses of insurance company employees could carry out this amalgamation immediately and without any effort, provided a revolutionary-democratic government decreed and ordered directors and large shareholders to effect the amalgamation without the slightest delay and held them strictly accountable for it. Hundreds of millions of rubles have been invested in the insurance business by the capitalists; the work is all done by the employees. The amalgamation of this business would lead to lower insurance premiums, would provide a host of advantages and conveniences for the insured and would make it possible to enlarge their number with the former expenditure of effort and funds. Absolutely nothing but the inertia, routine and greed of a handful of holders of remunerative jobs is delaying this reform, which, again, would enhance the "power of defence" of the country by economizing national labour and creating a number of real opportunities to "regulate economic life" not in words, but in deeds.

NATIONALIZATION OF THE SYNDICATES

Capitalism differs from the old, pre-capitalistic systems of economy by the fact that it has created the closest ties and interdependence between its various branches. Were this not so, incidentally, no steps towards Socialism would be technically possible. Modern capitalism, in which the banks dominate production, has carried this interdependence of the various branches of national economy to an extreme. The banks and the more important branches of industry and commerce have become inseparably merged. This means, on the one hand, that it is impossible to nationalize the banks alone, without proceeding to create a state monopoly of commercial and industrial syndicates (sugar, coal, iron, oil, etc.), and without nationalizing these syndicates. It means, on the other hand, that if carried out in earnest, the regulation of economic life would demand the simultaneous nationalization of the banks and the syndicates.

Let us take the Sugar Syndicate as an example. It was created under tsardom, and even at that time developed into a huge capitalist

amalgamation of splendidly equipped refineries and factories And, of course, this amalgamation, thoroughly imbued as it was with the most reactionary and bureaucratic spirit, ensured scandalously high profits for the capitalists and reduced the workers and employees to the status of humiliated and downtrodden slaves without any rights whatever Even at that time the state already controlled and regulated production—in the interests of the rich magnates

All that remains here is to transform reactionary bureaucratic regulation into revolutionary-democratic regulation by simple decrees providing for the summoning of congresses of employees, engineers, directors and shareholders, for the introduction of uniform accountancy, for control by the trade unions, etc This is a very simple thing—yet it has not been done!! Under the democratic republic the reactionary bureaucratic regulation of the sugar industry *actually* remains, everything remains as it was the wasteful dissipation of national labour, routine and stagnation, and the enrichment of the Bobrinskys and Tereshchenkos The democracy, and not the bureaucracy, the workers and employees, and not the "sugar kings," should be called upon to exercise independent initiative—and this could and should be done in a few days, at one stroke, if only the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did not befog the minds of the people by plans for a "coalition" *with these very sugar kings, for the very coalition* with the wealthy from which, and as a consequence of which, the "complete inactivity" of the government in the matter of regulating economic life follows with absolute inevitability *

Take the oil business It had already to a vast extent been "socialized" by the earlier development of capitalism Just a couple of oil kings wield millions and hundreds of millions of rubles, clipping coupons and accumulating fabulous profits from the "business" which is *already* actually, technically and socially organized on a nation wide scale and is *already* being conducted by hundreds and thousands of employees, engineers, etc The nationalization of the oil industry could be effected *at once*, and it is imperative *for a revolutionary democratic state, especially when the latter* suffers from an acute crisis and when it is essential to economize national labour and to increase the output of fuel at all costs It is clear that here bureaucratic control can achieve nothing and can change nothing, for the "oil kings" can cope with the Tereshchenkos, the Kerenskys, the Avksentyevs and the Skobelevs as easily as they coped with the tsar's Ministers, by means of delays, excuses and promises, and by the direct and indirect bribery of the bourgeois press (this is called "public opinion," and it is with this that the Kerenskys and Avksentyevs "reckon"), and the bribery

* These lines had already been written when I learnt from the newspapers that the Kerensky government is introducing a sugar monopoly, and, of course, is introducing it in a reactionary bureaucratic way, without congresses of employees and workers, without publicity, and without bridling the capitalists!!

of officials (left by the Kerenskys and Avksentyevs in their old jobs in the old and inviolable state machine).

If anything is to be done in earnest, bureaucracy must be abandoned for democracy, and in a revolutionary way, *i.e.*, war must be declared on the oil kings and shareholders, the confiscation of their property and punishment by imprisonment must be decreed for delaying the nationalization of the oil business, for concealing incomes or accounts, for sabotaging production, and for failing to take measures to increase production. The initiative of the workers and employees must be appealed to; *they* must be immediately summoned to conferences and congresses; a certain part of the profits must be assigned to *them* if they institute all-embracing control and increase production. If such revolutionary-democratic steps had been taken at once, immediately, in April 1917, Russia, which is one of the richest countries in the world in respect to reserves of liquid fuel, might, using water transport, have done a very great deal during this summer to supply the people with the necessary quantities of fuel.

Neither the bourgeois nor the coalition Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik-Cadet government has done anything whatever; both have confined themselves to a bureaucratic playing at reforms. They have not dared to take a single revolutionary-democratic step. Everything has remained as it was under the tsars—the same oil kings, the same stagnation, the same hatred of the workers and employees for their exploiters, the same disruption as a consequence, and the same dissipation of national labour—only the *headings* on the incoming and outgoing documents in the "republican" offices have been changed!

As to the coal industry, which technically and culturally is no less "ready" for nationalization, and which is being no less shamelessly managed by the robbers of the people, the coal kings, there are a number of most striking *facts* of direct sabotage, direct *damage* to, and suspension of production by the industrialists. Even the Ministerial *Rabochaya Gazeta* of the Mensheviks has admitted these facts. And what do we find? Absolutely nothing has been done, except to call the old, reactionary-bureaucratic conferences "on a parity basis"—half workers and half bandits from the Coal Syndicate!! Not a single revolutionary-democratic step has been taken, not a shadow of an attempt has been made to establish the only control which is real control, control from *below*, through the employees' unions, through the workers, and by terrorizing the coal-owners, who are ruining the country and bringing production to a standstill! But what else would you have when we are "all" in favour of a "coalition," you know—if not with the Cadets, then with commercial and industrial circles; and coalition means leaving the power in the hands of the capitalists, letting them go unpunished, allowing them to hamper affairs, while everything is blamed on the workers, the chaos intensified, and the way *thus* paved for a new Kornilov affair!

ABOLITION OF COMMERCIAL SECRECY

Unless commercial secrecy is abolished, either control over production and distribution will remain an empty promise, only needed to enable the Cadets to fool the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to fool the toiling classes, or control can be exercised only by reactionary-bureaucratic ways and means Although this is obvious to every unprejudiced person, and although the necessity for the abolition of commercial secrecy has been persistently stressed by the *Pravda* (which was suppressed largely for this reason by the Kerensky government in deference to capital), *neither our republican* government nor "the authoritative organs of revolutionary democracy" have even thought of this *prime requisite* for real control.

This is the key to all control. This is the most sensitive spot of capital, which is robbing the people and sabotaging production. And that is why the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are afraid to have anything to do with this point.

The usual argument of the capitalists, one repeated by the petty bourgeoisie without reflection, is that capitalist economy cannot in general permit the abolition of commercial secrecy, for the private ownership of the means of production and the dependence of the individual enterprises on the market render essential the "sacredness" of commercial books and commercial operations, including, of course, banking operations.

Those who in one form or another repeat this or similar arguments allow themselves to be deceived and themselves deceive the people by shutting their eyes to two fundamental, highly important and generally known facts of modern economic life The first fact is the existence of large-scale capitalism, i e , the peculiar features of the system of banks, syndicates, large factories, etc. The second fact is the war.

The fact of the matter is that modern large scale capitalism, which is everywhere becoming monopoly capitalism, deprives commercial secrecy of every shadow of reasonable justification, turns it into hypocrisy and into an instrument exclusively for concealing financial fraud and the fabulous profits of large scale capital. Large scale capitalist economy, by its very technical nature is socialized production, that is, it both operates for millions of people and, directly or indirectly, unites by its operations hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of families. Therein it differs from the economy of the small artisan or the average peasant, who keep no commercial books at all, and whom therefore the abolition of commercial secrecy would not affect!

The operations of large scale production are in any case known to hundreds of persons and more. Here the law protecting commercial secrecy does not serve the interests of production or exchange, but those of profiteering and profit-mongering in their crudest form, and direct fraud, which as we know, in the case of joint-stock companies is extremely widespread

and is very skilfully concealed by reports and balance sheets, so compiled as to deceive the public.

While commercial secrecy is unavoidable in small commodity production, *i.e.*, among the small peasants and artisans, where production itself is not socialized and is scattered and disunited, in large-scale capitalist production, on the other hand, the preservation of commercial secrecy means the preservation of the privileges and profits of literally a handful of people *against* the interests of the whole people. This has already been recognized by the law, inasmuch as it provides for the publication of the reports of joint-stock companies. But *this* control, which has already been introduced in all advanced countries, as well as in Russia, is reactionary bureaucratic control which does not open the eyes of the *people* and which *does not permit* a knowledge to be obtained of the *whole truth* about the operations of joint-stock companies.

Acting in a revolutionary-democratic way necessitates passing another law immediately, a law that will abolish commercial secrecy, demand of the big enterprises and the wealthy the fullest possible accountancy and confer on every group of citizens of a solid democratic numerical strength (1,000 or 10,000 voters, let us say) the right to examine *all* the documents of any large enterprise. Such a measure could be fully and easily achieved by a simple decree. It *alone* would develop *popular* initiative in control, through the office employees' unions, the workers' unions and all the political parties, and it alone would make control real and democratic.

Add to this the fact of the war. The vast majority of commercial and industrial establishments are now working not for the "free market," but *for the government*, for the war. I have therefore already stated in the *Pravda* that people who oppose us with the argument that Socialism cannot be introduced are liars, and barefaced liars at that, because it is not a question of introducing Socialism now, directly, overnight, but of *exposing robbery of the treasury*.

Capitalist "war" industry (*i.e.*, industry directly or indirectly connected with war supplies) is raking in untold profits; untold profits are being made by the Cadet gentlemen, and the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are opposing the abolition of commercial secrecy, are nothing but *aiders and abettors of robbery of the treasury*.

The war is now costing Russia fifty million rubles *a day*. These fifty millions a day mostly go to army contractors. Of these fifty millions, at least five millions *daily*, and probably ten millions or more, consist of the "honest income" of the capitalists and the officials who are in one way or another in collusion with them. The very large firms and banks which lend money for operations in war supplies thereby earn fabulous profits, and do so precisely by robbing the treasury, for no other epithet can be applied to this defrauding and plundering of the people in connection with the hardships of war and the ruin of hundreds of thousands and millions of people.

"Everybody" knows about these scandalous profits made on war contracts, "everybody" knows about the "letters of guarantee" which are concealed by the banks, "everybody" knows who is gaining by the rising cost of living, it is talked about with a smile in "society." Quite a number of precise references are made to it *even* in the bourgeois press, which as a general rule is silent about "unpleasant" facts and avoids "ticklish" questions. Everybody knows about it, yet everybody keeps silent, tolerates it and puts up with the government, which prates eloquently about "control" and "regulation."

The revolutionary democrats, if they had really been revolutionaries and democrats, would have immediately passed a law abolishing commercial secrecy, compelling contractors and merchants to render public accounts, forbidding them to abandon their field of activity without the permission of the authorities, and imposing the penalty of confiscation of property and shooting* for concealment and for deceiving the people when the latter organize supervision and control *from below*, democratically, by the people themselves, by the unions of employees, workers, consumers, etc

Our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks fully deserve to be called scared democrats, for on this question they repeat what is said by the scared petty bourgeois, namely, that the capitalists will "run away" if "too severe" measures are adopted, that "we" will be unable to get along without the capitalists, that the British and French millionaires, who are "supporting" us, of course, will most likely be "offended," and the like It might be thought that the Bolsheviks were proposing something unknown to the history of mankind, something that has never been tried before, something "utopian," when as a matter of fact even 125 years ago in France, people who were really "revolutionary democrats," who were really convinced of the justice and defensive character of the war they were waging, who really had the support of the masses and were sincerely convinced of this, were able to establish *revolutionary* control over the rich and to achieve results which earned the admiration of the whole world And in the century and a quarter that has since elapsed, capitalism, by creating banks, syndicates, railways and so forth, has extremely facilitated and simplified the adoption of measures of really democratic control by the workers and peasants over the exploiters, the landlords and capitalists.

In point of fact, the whole question of control boils down to the question: who controls whom, *i.e.*, which class is the controller and which the

* I have already had occasion to point out in the Bolshevik press that objections to the death penalty can be entertained only when the latter is applied by the exploiters against the *mass* of the toilers with the purpose of maintaining exploitation It is hardly likely that any revolutionary government could avoid applying the death penalty to the *exploiters* (*i e*, the landlords and capitalists)

controlled. In our country, in republican Russia, with the help of the "authoritative" organs of supposedly revolutionary democracy, it is the landlords and capitalists who are still recognized as and who still are the controlled. The inevitable result is the capitalist marauding that is provoking the universal indignation of the people, and the economic chaos that is being artificially fostered by the capitalists. We must resolutely and unalterably, without fearing to break with the old and boldly to build the new, pass to control *over* the landlords and capitalists *by* the workers and peasants. And this is what our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks fear worse than the plague.

COMPULSORY AMALGAMATION INTO UNIONS

Compulsory trustification, *i.e.*, compulsory amalgamation, of the industrialists, for example, is already being practised in Germany. This also is not new. And here, too, through the fault of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, we see the utter stagnation of republican Russia, which these little-to-be-respected parties "entertain" by dancing a quadrille with the Cadets, or with the Bublikovs, or with Tereshchenko and Kerensky.

Compulsory trustification is, on the one hand, a means whereby the state as it were expedites capitalist development, which everywhere leads to the organization of the class struggle and to a growth in the number, variety and importance of unions. And, on the other hand, compulsory "unionization" is a prerequisite for any kind of earnest control and economy of national labour.

The German law, for instance, compels the leather manufacturers of a given locality or of the whole country to form an amalgamation, on the board of which there is a representative of the government for the purpose of control. A law of this kind does not directly, *i.e.*, by itself, affect property relations in any way; it does not deprive a single owner of a single farthing and does not predetermine whether the control is to be exercised in a reactionary-bureaucratic or a revolutionary-democratic form, direction or spirit.

Such laws can and should be passed in our country immediately, without losing a single week of precious time, it being left to *social conditions themselves* to determine the more detailed forms of putting the law into effect, the speed with which it is put into effect, the methods of supervision, etc. The state requires no special machinery, nor any special investigation, nor any preliminary inquiries for the passing of such a law; all that is required is the determination to break with certain private interests of the capitalists, who are "not accustomed" to such interference and who have no desire to forfeit the super-profits which are ensured by the old way of managing in addition to the absence of control.

No machinery and no "statistics" (which Chernov wanted *to substitute* for the revolutionary initiative of the peasants) are required *for* the passing of such a law, inasmuch as the obligation of carrying out the law must be laid on the manufacturers and industrialists themselves and on the *available* public forces, under the control of the available public (*i e*, non governmental, *non-bureaucratic*) forces too, which, however, must consist in all cases of the so called "inferior orders," *i e*, of the oppressed and exploited classes, which *in history have always proved to be superior to the* exploiters in their capacity for heroism, self sacrifice and comradely discipline

Let us assume that we have a really revolutionary democratic government and that it decides that the manufacturers and industrialists in every branch of production who employ, let us say, not less than two workers shall be obliged immediately to amalgamate into district and provincial unions Responsibility for the rigid observance of the law is laid above all on the manufacturers, directors, members of boards and large shareholders (for they are the real leaders of modern industry, its real masters) They are to be regarded as deserters from military service, and punished as such, if they do not work for the immediate carrying out of the law, and are to *bear mutual responsibility, each answering for all with the whole of his* property Responsibility is next laid on all office employees, who shall also be obliged to form *one* union, and on all workers and their trade unions The purpose of "unionization' is to establish the fullest, strictest and most detailed accountancy, but chiefly to *combine operations* in the purchase of raw materials, the sale of products, and the *economy* of national funds and forces If the disunited establishments are amalgamated into a single trust, *this economy can attain tremendous proportions*, as economic science teaches us and as is shown by the example of all syndicates, cartels and trusts And it must again be repeated that amalgamation into trusts will not by itself alter property relations one iota and will not deprive a single *owner of a single farthing This fact must be strongly stressed, for the bourgeois press constantly "frightens" the small and medium proprietors* by asserting that the Socialists in general, and the Bolsheviks in particular, want to "expropriate" them—an obviously false assertion, as Socialists do not intend to, cannot and will not expropriate the small peasant *even if there is a complete Socialist* revolution But what we are talking about is *only* the immediate and urgent measures, which *have already been introduced* in Western Europe and which any at all consistent democracy must immediately introduce in our country in order to combat impending and inevitable disaster.

Serious difficulties, both technical and cultural, would be encountered in amalgamating the small and very small proprietors into unions, *owing* to the extreme disunity and technical primitiveness of their enterprises and the *illiteracy* and lack of education of the owners But these enterprises could in fact be exempted from the law (as was remarked above in

our hypothetical example); their non-amalgamation, let alone their belated amalgamation, would not create any serious obstacle, for the part played by the huge number of small enterprises in the sum total of production and their importance to the national economy as a whole is *insignificant*, and, moreover, they are often in one way or another dependent on the big enterprises.

Only the big enterprises are of decisive importance; and here the technical and cultural means and forces for "unionization" *do exist*; what is lacking is the firm, determined initiative of a *revolutionary* government which is ruthless towards the exploiters, in order to make these forces and means effective.

The poorer the country is in technically trained forces and in intellectual forces generally, the more *urgent* it is to decree compulsory amalgamation as early and as resolutely as possible and to begin with the bigger and biggest enterprises when putting it into effect, for amalgamation will *economize* intellectual forces and make it possible to utilize them *to the full* and to distribute them more effectively. If, after 1905, even the Russian peasants in their remote districts, under the tsarist government, and encountering the thousands of obstacles created by that government, were able to make a tremendous forward stride in the creation of all kinds of unions, it is clear that the amalgamation of large-scale and medium industry and trade could be effected in a few months, if not sooner, provided compulsion to this end were exercised by a really revolutionary-democratic government relying on the support, aid, interest and advantage of the "lower orders," the democracy, the employees and workers, calling upon *them* to exercise control.

REGULATION OF CONSUMPTION

The war has compelled all the belligerent and many of the neutral countries to resort to the regulation of consumption. Bread cards have appeared and have become a common thing, and they are being followed by other cards. Russia is not behind-hand and has also introduced food cards.

But here, perhaps, we can draw the most striking comparison of all between reactionary-bureaucratic methods of averting a catastrophe, which try to confine themselves to minimum reforms, and revolutionary-democratic methods, which, to be worthy of their name, must directly aim at a violent rupture with the old, obsolete system and the achievement of the fastest possible progress.

Bread cards—this principal example of how consumption is regulated in modern capitalist countries—aim at and achieve (at best) one thing only, namely, the distribution of available supplies of grain so that there is enough for everybody. A maximum limit of consumption is established, not for all articles by far, but only for articles of "general consumption."

And that is all Nothing else is done Available supplies of bread are calculated in a bureaucratic way, they are divided according to the number of the population, a ration is determined and introduced, and that is all Luxury articles are not affected, for "in any case" they are so dear as to be beyond the pocket of the "people " And so, in *all* the belligerent countries without exception, *even* in Germany, which, *without fear of contradiction*, can be said to be a model of accurate, pedantic and rigid regulation of consumption—we find that the rich constantly *get around* all 'rations" of every kind This too "everybody" knows and "everybody" talks about with a smile, and in the German Socialist press, and sometimes even in the bourgeois press, despite the military stringency of the German censorship, we constantly find items and reports about the "menus" of the rich, saying how the wealthy can obtain white bread in any quantity at some health resort (visited, on the plea of illness, by everybody who has money), and how the wealthy substitute for *articles of common consumption* choice and rare articles of luxury

A reactionary capitalist state which *fears* to undermine the foundations of capitalism, the foundations of wage slavery, the foundations of the economic supremacy of the rich, which *fears* to develop the independent activity of the workers and the toilers generally, which *fears* to "kindle" their demands, will be quite content with bread cards Such a state does not *for a moment, in any measure it adopts, lose sight of the reactionary aim* of strengthening capitalism, preventing its being undermined, and confining the "regulation of economic life" in general, and the regulation of consumption in particular, to only those measures which are absolutely essential to feed the people at all, without *attempting* any real regulation of consumption by exercising *control over the rich* and laying on them, who are better off, privileged, well fed and overfed in times of peace, the *greater part* of the burden in time of war

The reactionary bureaucratic solution of the problem with which the people have been confronted by the war confines itself to bread cards, to the equal distribution of the articles of general consumption absolutely essential to keep the people fed, without abandoning bureaucratic and reactionary methods one iota, without abandoning the aim of *not* arousing the initiative of the poor, the proletariat, the mass of the people (the *demos*), of *not* allowing *them to exercise control* over the rich, and of leaving as many loopholes *as possible* for the rich to compensate themselves with articles of luxury And a large number of loopholes are left in *all* countries, we repeat, even in Germany—not to speak of Russia, the "common people" starve while the rich visit health resorts, supplement the meagre official ration by all sorts of "extras" obtained on the side, and do *not* allow *themselves* to be controlled

In Russia, which has *only* just made a revolution against the tsarist regime in the name of freedom and equality, in Russia, which, as far as its actual political institutions are concerned, immediately became a demo

cratic republic, what particularly strikes the people, what particularly arouses the discontent, irritation, anger and indignation of the masses is the easy way the wealthy can get around the "food cards," which is patent to *all*. They find it very easy indeed. Surreptitiously, and for a very high price, especially if one has "*pull*" (which only the rich have), one can obtain everything, and in large quantities too. The people are starving. The regulation of consumption is being confined within the narrowest and most bureaucratic-reactionary limits. The government has not the slightest intention of placing regulation on really revolutionary-democratic lines, and has not the least interest in doing so.

"Everybody" is suffering from the queues ... but the rich get their servants to stand in the queues, and even engage special servants for the purpose! And that is "democracy"!

At a time when the country is suffering untold hardships, a revolutionary-democratic policy of combating the impending catastrophe would not confine itself to food cards, but would add, firstly, the compulsory organization of the whole population in consumers' societies, for otherwise control over consumption cannot be exercised fully; secondly, labour service for the rich, making them perform unpaid secretarial and similar services for these consumers' societies; thirdly, the equal distribution among the population of absolutely all articles of consumption, so as really to distribute the burdens of the war equably; fourthly, the organization of control in such a way that the consumption of the rich would be controlled by the poorer classes of the population.

The creation of real democracy in this sphere and the display of a real revolutionary spirit in the organization of control by the most needy classes of the people would be a very great stimulus to the employment of all available intellectual forces and to the development of the truly revolutionary energies of the entire people. Whereas now the Ministers of republican and revolutionary-democratic Russia, exactly like their confrères in all other imperialist countries, eloquently prate about "working in common for the good of the people" and about "harnessing all forces," when as a matter of fact the people see, feel and sense the hypocrisy of such utterances.

The result is that no progress is being made, chaos is spreading irresistibly, and a catastrophe is approaching; for our government cannot introduce military servitude for the workers in the Kornilov, Hindenburg, generally imperialistic, way—the traditions, memories, survivals, habits and institutions of the *revolution* are still too vivid among the people—yet it does not want to take any really serious steps in a revolutionary-democratic direction, for it is thoroughly infected and thoroughly enmeshed by its dependence on the bourgeoisie, its "coalition" with the bourgeoisie, and its fear to encroach on the actual privileges of the bourgeoisie.

THE GOVERNMENT IS FRUSTRATING THE WORK OF THE DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATIONS

We have examined various ways and means of combating disaster and famine We have everywhere seen that the contradictions between the democracy, on the one hand, and the government and the bloc of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks which is supporting it, on the other, are irreconcilable To show that these contradictions exist in reality, and not merely in our exposition, and that their irreconcilability is borne out *in fact* by conflicts *of national dimensions*, we have only to recall two very typical "summaries" and lessons of the six months' history of our revolution

The history of the "reign" of Palchinsky is one lesson The history of the "reign" and fall of Peshekhonov is the other

The measures to combat disaster and famine described above essentially amount to the all round encouragement (even to the extent of compulsion) of the "unionization" of the population and particularly of the democracy, *i e* , the majority of the population—and that means above all of the oppressed classes, the workers and peasants, and especially the poorer peasants And this is the path which the population itself spontaneously began to adopt in order to cope with the unparalleled difficulties, burdens and hardships of the war

Tsarism did everything to hamper the free and independent "unionization" of the population But after the fall of the tsarist monarchy, democratic organizations began to spring up and grow rapidly all over Russia The struggle against the catastrophe began to be waged by self appointed democratic organizations—by all sorts of committees of supply, food committees, fuel councils, and so on and so forth

And the most remarkable thing in the whole six months' history of our revolution, as far as the question we are examining is concerned, is that a *government* which calls itself republican and revolutionary, and which is *supported* by the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries in the name of the "authoritative organs of revolutionary democracy," *fought* the democratic organizations and *defeated them*!!

In this fight, Palchinsky earned very wide and very sad notoriety He acted behind the back of the government, without coming out publicly (just as the Cadets preferred to act in general, willingly putting forward Tseretelis "for the people," while they themselves arranged all the important business on the quiet) Palchinsky hampered and thwarted every serious measure taken by the self appointed democratic organizations, for there could be no serious measure which would not "injure" the excessive profits and arbitrariness of the capitalists And Palchinsky was in fact a loyal defender and servitor of the *Kit Kitych*es Palchinsky went so far—and this fact was reported in the newspapers—as directly to *annul* the orders of the self appointed democratic organizations!!

The whole history of Palchinsky's "reign"—and he "reigned" for many months, and, moreover, at the very time when Tsereteli, Skobelev and Chernov were "Ministers"—was a monstrous scandal from beginning to end; the will of the people and the decisions of the democracy were frustrated *for the benefit of* the capitalists and for the sake of their filthy greed. Of course, only an insignificant part of Palchinsky's "feats" could appear in the press, and a full investigation of the way he *interfered* with the efforts to avert famine can be made only by a truly democratic government of the proletariat when it conquers power and submits all the deeds of Palchinsky and his like, without reservation, *to the judgment* of the people.

It will perhaps be objected that Palchinsky was an exception, and that after all he was dismissed.... But the fact is that Palchinsky was not an exception but the *rule*, that the situation has in no way improved with his dismissal, that his place has been taken by similar Palchinskys with different names, and that all the *"influence"* of the capitalists, and the whole policy of *frustrating the efforts to avert famine for the benefit of the capitalists* has remained unaltered. For Kerensky and Co. are only a shield for the interests of the capitalists.

The most striking proof of this is the resignation of Peshekhonov, the Minister of Food. As we know, Peshekhonov is a very, very moderate Narodnik. But in the organization of food affairs he wanted to work honestly, in contact with and relying on the democratic organizations. The *experience* of Peshekhonov's work and his *resignation* are all the more interesting for the fact that this moderate Narodnik, this member of the "Popular Socialist" Party, who was ready to consent to any compromise with the bourgeoisie, was nevertheless compelled to resign! For the Kerensky government, in the interests of the capitalists, landlords and kulaks, had *raised* the fixed prices of grain!

This is how M. Smith describes this "step" and its significance in the newspaper *Svobodnaya Zhizn*,* No. 1, of September 2:

> "Several days before the government decided to raise the fixed prices, the following scene was enacted in the National Food Committee: Rolovich, a representative of the Right, a stubborn defender of the interests of private trade and a ruthless opponent of the grain monopoly and state interference in economic affairs, publicly announced with a smug smile that, according to information at his disposal, the fixed grain prices would very shortly be raised.
>
> "The representative of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies replied by declaring that he knew nothing of this, that as long as the revolution in Russia lasted such a thing could not happen, and that at any rate the government could not adopt such a

* *Svobodnaya Zhizn* (*Free Life*)—a Menshevik newspaper published in Petrograd in September 1917.—*Ed.*

measure without first consulting the authoritative organs of the democracy—the Economic Council and the National Food Committee This statement was backed by a representative of the Soviet of Peasants' Deputies.

"But, alas, reality introduced a very harsh amendment to this counter version! It was *the representative of the wealthy elements* and not the representatives of the democracy who turned out to be *right* He *proved to* be excellently informed of the preparations for the attack on the rights of the democracy, although the representatives of the latter indignantly denied the very possibility of such an attack "

And so, both the representative of the workers and the representative of the peasants *express their definite opinion in the name of the vast* majority of the people, yet the Kerensky government does the very opposite *in the interests of the capitalists!*

Rolovich, a representative of the capitalists, turned out to be excellently informed behind the back of the democracy—just as we have always observed, and now observe, that the bourgeois newspapers, the *Rech* (*Speech*) and the *Birzheviye Vyedomosti* (*Stock Exchange Bulletin*),* are best informed of the doings of the Kerensky government

What does this excellent state of information show? Obviously, that the capitalists have their "contacts" and *virtually* hold the power in their own hands Kerensky is a puppet which they use in any way and at any time they find necessary. The interests of tens of millions of workers and peasants are sacrificed to the profits of a handful of rich men

How did our Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks react to this outrageous insult to the people? Did they appeal to the workers and peasants and declare that after *this prison was the only place for Kerensky and* his colleagues?

God forbid! The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, *through* their "Economic Section," confined themselves to adopting the threatening resolution to which we have already referred! In this resolution they declare that the raising of grain prices by the Kerensky government is "a *fatal* measure which deals a *severe blow* both to food affairs and to the whole economic life of the country," and that these fatal measures are in direct "*violation*" of the law!

Such are the results of the policy of compromise, the policy of dallying with Kerensky and desiring to "spare" him!

The government violates the law by adopting, in the interests of the rich, the landlords and capitalists, a measure which *ruins* the whole work of control, food supply and salvaging the extremely shaky finances, yet the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks continue to talk about reaching an understanding with commercial and industrial circles, continue to

* A bourgeois daily published in St Petersburg between 1880 and 1918 —*Ed*

attend conferences with Tereshchenko, continue to spare Kerensky and confine themselves to a paper resolution of protest, which the government very calmly pigeonholes!!

This very strikingly reveals the truth that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have betrayed the people and the revolution, and that the Bolsheviks are becoming the real leaders of the masses, *even* of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik masses.

For, in fact, only the conquest of power by the proletariat, headed by the Bolshevik Party, could put an end to the outrageous actions of Kerensky and Co. and *restore* the work of the democratic food, supply and other organizations, which Kerensky and his government are *frustrating*.

The Bolsheviks—and this is very clearly borne out by the example quoted—are acting as the representatives of the interests of the *whole* people, the interests of food control and supply, the interests of the urgent needs of the workers *and peasants*, despite the vacillating, irresolute and truly treacherous policy of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, which has brought the country to such a shameful pass as this raising of grain prices!

FINANCIAL COLLAPSE AND HOW TO COMBAT IT

There is another side to the raising of the fixed grain prices. This raising of prices involves a new chaotic increase in the emission of paper money, a new advance in the rising cost of living, increased financial disorganization and approaching financial collapse. Everybody admits that the emission of paper money constitutes the worst form of compulsory loan, that it most of all affects the condition of the workers, the poorer section of the population, and that it is the chief evil of the financial disorder.

And it is to such a measure that the Kerensky government, supported by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, is resorting!

There is no way of seriously combating financial disorganization and inevitable financial collapse except by that revolutionary rupture with the interests of capital and that organization of really democratic control, *i.e.*, control from "below," by the workers and poor peasants *over* the capitalists, which we have referred to throughout the earlier part of this exposition.

The immense issues of paper money encourage profiteering, enable the capitalists to make millions of rubles, and place tremendous difficulties in the way of the expansion of production, which is so essential—for the high cost of materials, machinery, etc., is progressing by leaps and bounds. What can be done when the wealth acquired by the rich through profiteering is being concealed?

An income tax with progressive and very high rates on larger incomes might be introduced. Our government has introduced one, following the

example of other imperialist governments. But it is to a large extent a fiction, a dead letter, for, firstly, the value of money is falling ever more precipitately, and, secondly, incomes are being the more concealed the more their source lies in speculation and the more securely commercial secrecy is protected

To make the tax a real tax, and not a fictitious one, real, not nominal, control is required. But control over the capitalists is impossible if it remains bureaucratic control, for the bureaucracy is itself bound and interwoven with the bourgeoisie by thousands of threads. That is why in the West-European imperialist countries, be they monarchies or republics, financial improvement is obtained solely by the introduction of "labour service," which creates *military hard labour* or *military servitude* for the workers

Reactionary-bureaucratic control is the only method known to imperialist states—not excluding the democratic republics of France and America—of foisting the burdens of the war on the proletariat and the toiling masses.

The basic contradiction in the policy of our government is that—in order not to quarrel with the bourgeoisie and not to destroy the "coalition" with *it—it has to introduce reactionary-bureaucratic control*, while calling it "revolutionary democratic" control, deceiving the people at every step and irritating and angering the masses who have just overthrown tsarism

Yet only revolutionary-democratic measures, only the uniting of the oppressed classes, the workers and peasants, the masses, into unions can make it possible to establish really effective control *over the rich* and conduct a really successful fight against the concealment of incomes

The attempt is being made to encourage the use of cheques as a means of avoiding excessive issues of paper money This measure is of no significance as far as the poor are concerned, for they live from hand to mouth anyhow, complete their "economic cycle" anyhow in one week and return to the capitalists the few meagre pence they manage to earn The use of cheques might have great significance as far as the rich are concerned, it might enable the government, *especially in conjunction with such measures* as the nationalization of the banks and the abolition of commercial secrecy, *really to control* the incomes of the capitalists, really to impose taxation on them, and really to "democratize" (and at the same time bring order into) the financial system

But the obstacle to this is the fear of encroaching on the privileges of the bourgeoisie and destroying the "coalition" with the bourgeoisie. For unless really *revolutionary measures are adopted* and compulsion is seriously resorted to, the capitalists will not submit to any control, will not make known their budgets, and will not allow "account" of their holdings of paper money to be kept by the democratic state.

The workers and peasants, combined in unions, by nationalizing the banks, making the use of cheques legally compulsory for all rich persons,

abolishing commercial secrecy, imposing confiscation of property as a penalty for concealment of incomes, etc., might with extreme ease render control both effective and universal—control, that is, over the rich, and such control as would *secure the return to the treasury* of the paper money it issues *from those* who have it, *from those* who conceal it.

This requires a revolutionary dictatorship of the democracy, headed by the revolutionary proletariat; that is, it requires that the democracy should become revolutionary *in fact*. That is the whole crux of the matter. But that is just what is not wanted by our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who are deceiving the people by the *flag* of "revolutionary democracy" while they are in fact supporting the reactionary-bureaucratic policy of the bourgeoisie, which, as always, is guided by the rule: *après nous le déluge*—after us the flood!

We usually do not even notice how thoroughly permeated we are by anti-democratic customs and prejudices regarding the "sacredness" of bourgeois property. When an engineer or banker publishes the income and expenditure of a worker, data about his wages and his productivity of labour, this is regarded as absolutely legitimate and fair. Nobody thinks of regarding it as an intrusion into the "private life" of the worker, as "spying or informing" on the part of the engineer. Bourgeois society regards the work and wages of a wage-worker as *its* open book, any bourgeois being entitled to peer into it at any moment, and at any moment to expose the "luxury" of the worker, his supposed "laziness," etc.

Well, and what about the reverse control? What if the unions of employees, clerks and *servants* were invited by a *democratic* state to verify the incomes and expenditures of capitalists, to publish information on the subject and to assist the government in combating concealment of incomes?

What a furious howl about "spying" and "informing" would be raised by the bourgeoisie! When the "masters" control servants, and capitalists control workers, this is considered to be in the nature of things; the private life of the toilers and exploited is *not* considered inviolable; the bourgeoisie is entitled to call to account any "wage-slave" and at any time to publish his income and expenditure. But what if the oppressed attempted to control the oppressor, to throw light on *his* income and expenditure, to expose *his* luxurious living, even in time of war, when his luxurious living is directly responsible for the fact that the armies at the front are starving and perishing—oh no, the bourgeoisie will not tolerate "spying" and "informing"!

It all boils down to the same thing: the rule of the bourgeoisie *is irreconcilable* with true revolution and true democracy. One cannot be a revolutionary democrat in the twentieth century and in a capitalist country *if one fears* to advance towards Socialism.

CAN THERE BE PROGRESS IF ONE FEARS TO ADVANCE TOWARDS SOCIALISM?

What has been said so far might easily arouse the following objection on the part of a reader who has been brought up on the prevalent opportunist ideas of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks the majority of the measures described here, he may say, are *already* essentially Social ist and not democratic measures!

This current objection, one that is usually raised (in one form or another) in the bourgeois, Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press, is a reac tionary defence of backward capitalism, a defence got up in the Struve manner We are not ripe for Socialism, it is claimed, it is too early to "introduce" Socialism, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, and there fore we must be the menials of the bourgeoisie (although the great bourgeois revolutionaries in France 125 years ago made their revolution a great revolution by exercising *terror* against all oppressors, both landlords and capitalists!)

The pseudo Marxist servitors of the bourgeoisie, who have been joined by the Socialist Revolutionaries and who argue in this way, do not under stand (as an examination of the theoretical basis of their opinion shows) what imperialism is, what capitalist monopoly is, what the state is, and what revolutionary democracy is For if they did understand, they would be bound to admit that there can be no progress without an advance towards Socialism

Everybody talks about imperialism But imperialism is nothing except monopoly capitalism

That capitalism in Russia has also become monopoly capitalism is sufficiently borne out by the Coal Syndicate,* the Iron and Steel Syndi cate,** the Sugar Syndicate, etc This Sugar Syndicate is an object lesson in the way monopoly capitalism grows into state monopoly capitalism.

And what is the state? It is an organization of the ruling class—in Germany, for instance, of the Junkers and capitalists And therefore what the German Plekhanovs (Scheidemann, Lentsch, etc) call "wartime so cialism" is in fact wartime state monopoly capitalism, or, to put it more simply and clearly, military servitude for the workers and military pro tection for the profits of the capitalists

Now, try to *substitute* for the junker capitalist state, the landlord capita list state, a *revolutionary democratic* state, *i e*, a state which in a revolu tionary way destroys *all* privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest

---

* *Coal Syndicate*—"The Russian Society for Trading in the Mineral Fuel of the Donetz Basin," otherwise known by its abbreviated Russian name "*Prod ugol*" The syndicate was founded in *1906* —*Ed*

** *Metal Syndicate*— Society for the Sale of the Manufactures of the Russian Iron and Steel Plants," otherwise known by its abbreviated Russian name "*Proda met*" The syndicate was founded in 1901 —*Ed*

democracy in a revolutionary way, and you will find that, given a really revolutionary-democratic state, state monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, or several steps, towards Socialism!

For if a large capitalist enterprise becomes a monopoly, it means that it serves the whole nation. If it has become a state monopoly, it means that the state (*i.e.*, the armed organization of the population, the workers and peasants in the first place, provided there is *revolutionary* democracy) directs the whole enterprise. In whose interest?

Either in the interest of the landlords and capitalists, in which case what we have is not a revolutionary-democratic, but a reactionary-bureaucratic state, an imperialist republic;

Or in the interest of the revolutionary democracy—and *that will be a step towards Socialism.*

For Socialism is nothing but the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly. Or, in other words, Socialism is nothing but state-capitalist monopoly which has been *turned in the interest of the whole people* and has therefore *ceased* to be capitalist monopoly.

There is no middle course here. The actual process of development is such that it is *impossible* to advance from *monopolies* (and the war has magnified their number, role and importance tenfold) without advancing towards Socialism.

Either you must be a revolutionary democrat in fact—in which case you must not fear to take steps towards Socialism;

Or you fear to take steps towards Socialism, condemn them in a Plekhanov, Dan, Chernov way, by arguing that our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, that Socialism cannot be "introduced," etc.—in which case you will inevitably sink to the position of Kerensky, Milyukov and Kornilov, *i.e.*, you will in a *reactionary-bureaucratic* way suppress the "revolutionary-democratic" strivings of the worker and peasant masses.

There is no middle course.

And therein lies the fundamental contradiction of our revolution.

It is impossible to stand still in history in general, and in time of war in particular. One must either advance or retreat. It is *impossible* in Russia of the twentieth century, which has won a republic and democracy, to advance in a revolutionary way without *advancing* towards Socialism, without taking *steps* towards it (steps conditioned and determined by the level of technique and culture: large-scale machine production cannot be "introduced" in peasant argriculture, and cannot be abolished in the sugar industry).

But to fear to advance *means* to retreat—which the Kerensky gentlemen, to the delight of the Milyukovs and Plekhanovs, and with the foolish assistance of the Tseretelis and Chernovs, are doing.

The dialectics of history is such that the war, by extraordinarily expediting the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly cap-

italism, has *thereby* extraordinarily advanced mankind towards Socialism

Imperialist war is the eve of Socialist revolution And this not only because the horrors of the war give rise to proletarian revolt—no revolt can bring about Socialism if the economic conditions for it are unripe—but because state-monopoly capitalism is a complete *material* preparation for Socialism, the *prelude* to Socialism, a rung in the ladder of history between which and the rung called Socialism *there are no intermediate rungs.*

* * *

Our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks approach the question of Socialism in a doctrinaire way, *from the standpoint of a doctrine learnt* by rote and wrongly understood They picture Socialism to be some remote, unknown and dim future

But Socialism is now gazing at us through all the windows of modern capitalism, Socialism is outlined directly, *practically*, by every important measure that constitutes a forward step on the basis of this modern capitalism

What is universal labour service?

It is a step forward on the basis of modern monopoly capitalism, a step towards the regulation of economic life as a whole in accordance with a certain general plan, a step towards the economy of national labour and towards the prevention of its senseless wastage by capitalism

In Germany it is the Junkers (landlords) and capitalists who are introducing universal labour service, and therefore it inevitably becomes military servitude for the workers

But take the same institution and ponder over its significance in a revolutionary democratic state *Universal labour service, introduced, regulated* and directed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, will *not yet* be Socialism, but *it* will *no longer* be capitalism It will be a tremendous *step towards* Socialism, a step from which, if complete democracy is observed, there can no longer be any retreat, back to capitalism, without extreme violence being exercised against the masses.

THE WAR AND HOW TO COMBAT ECONOMIC CHAOS

A consideration of the *measures to avert the impending* catastrophe leads us to deal with another important question, namely, the connection between home policy and *foreign* policy, or, in other words, the relation between a war of conquest, an imperialist war, and a revolutionary, proletarian war, between a criminal predatory war and a just democratic war

All the measures to avert catastrophe we have described would, as we have already stated, greatly enhance the defensive power, or, in other words, the military might of the country. That, on the one hand. On the other hand, these measures cannot be put into effect without transforming the war from a war of conquest into a just war, from a war waged by the capitalists in the interests of the capitalists into a war waged by the proletariat in the interests of all the toilers and exploited.

And, indeed, the nationalization of the banks and syndicates, taken in conjunction with the abolition of commercial secrecy and the establishment of workers' control over the capitalists, would not only imply a tremendous saving of national labour, the possibility of economizing forces and means, but would also imply an improvement in the condition of the toiling *masses* of the population, the majority of the population. As everybody knows, economic organization is of decisive importance in modern warfare. Russia has enough grain, coal, oil and iron; in this respect our position is better than that of any of the belligerent European countries. And given a struggle against economic chaos by the measures indicated, enlisting the initiative of the masses in this struggle, improving their condition, and nationalizing the banks and syndicates, Russia could utilize her revolution and her democracy to raise the whole country to an incomparably higher level of economic organization.

If instead of the "coalition" with the bourgeoisie which is hampering every measure of control and sabotaging production, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had in April effected the transfer of power to the Soviets and had directed their efforts not to playing a game of "Ministerial leapfrog," not to bureaucratically occupying, side by side with the Cadets, Ministerial, Assistant-Ministerial and similar posts, but to guiding the workers and peasants in *their* control *over* the capitalists, in their *war against* the capitalists, Russia would now be a country completely reformed economically, with the land in the hands of the peasants and the banks nationalized, *i.e.*, would *to that extent* (for these are extremely important economic bases of modern life) be *superior to* all other capitalist countries.

The defensive power, the military might of a country whose banks have been nationalized is *superior to* that of a country whose banks remain in private hands. The military might of a peasant country whose land is in the hands of peasant committees is *superior to* that of a country whose land is in the hands of landlords.

Reference is constantly made to the heroic patriotism and the miracles of military valour displayed by the French in 1792-93. But the material, historical economic conditions which alone made such miracles possible are forgotten. The abolition of obsolete feudalism in a really revolutionary way, and the introduction throughout the country of a superior method of production and a free system of peasant land tenure, effected, moreover, with truly revolutionary-democratic speed, determination, energy and

self sacrifice—such were the material economic conditions which with "miraculous" speed saved France by *regenerating* and *reconstructing* her economic foundation

The example of France shows one thing and one thing only, namely, that in order that Russia may be capable of self defence, in order that she may display "miracles" of mass heroism, the old system must be swept away with "Jacobin" ruthlessness and Russia reconstructed and regenerated *economically* And in the twentieth century this cannot be done merely by sweeping away tsardom (France did not confine herself to this 125 years ago) It cannot be done even by the mere revolutionary abolition of landed proprietorship (we have not even done that, for the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have betrayed the peasantry!), by the mere handing over of the land to the peasantry For we are living in the twentieth century, and mastery over the land *without mastery over the banks* cannot regenerate and reconstruct the life of the people

The material, industrial reconstruction of France at the end of the eighteenth century was associated with a political and spiritual reconstruction with the dictatorship of the revolutionary democracy and the revolutionary proletariat (from which the democracy had not yet disassociated itself and with which it was still almost fused), with a ruthless war proclaimed against everything reactionary The whole people, and especially the masses, *i e* , the *oppressed* classes, were seized by a boundless revolutionary enthusiasm *everybody* considered the war a just and defensive war, and such *it was in fact* Revolutionary France was defending herself against reactionary monarchical Europe It was not in 1792 93, but many years later, *after* the victory of reaction within the country, that the counter revolutionary dictatorship of Napoleon transformed the wars on France s part from defensive wars into wars of conquest

And what about Russia? We are continuing to wage an imperialist war in the interests of the capitalists, in alliance with the imperialists and in accordance with the secret treaties the *tsar* concluded with the capitalists of England and other countries, promising the Russian capitalists in these treaties the spoliation of foreign countries, Constantinople, Lvov, Armenia, etc

The war will continue to be an unjust, reactionary and predatory war on Russia's part as long as she does not propose a just peace and as long as she does not break with imperialism The social character of the war, its real meaning, is not determined by the position of the hostile troops (as the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks think, sinking to the vulgarity of an ignorant muzhik) The character of the war is determined by the *policy* of which the war is a continuation ("war is the continuation of politics"), by the *class* that is waging the war, and by the aims for which it is being waged

You cannot lead the masses into a war of conquest in accordance with secret treaties and expect them to be enthusiastic The advanced class

in revolutionary Russia, the proletariat, is coming more and more clearly to realize the criminal character of the war, and not only have the bourgeoisie been unable to persuade the masses to the contrary, but the realization of the criminal character of the war is growing. The proletariat *of both capitals* of Russia has definitely become internationalist!

How, then, can you expect mass enthusiasm for the war?

The one is intimately bound up with the other, home policy with foreign policy. The country cannot be made capable of self-defence without the supreme heroism of the people in carrying out great economic reforms boldly and resolutely. And it is impossible to arouse the heroism of the masses without breaking with imperialism, without proposing a democratic peace to all the nations, and without transforming the war in this way from a predatory and criminal war of conquest into a just, revolutionary war of defence.

Only a thorough and consistent break with the capitalists in both home and foreign policy can save our revolution and our country, which is gripped in the iron vise of imperialism.

THE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY AND THE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT

To be really revolutionary, the democracy of present-day Russia must march in a close alliance with the proletariat and support it in its struggle as the only thoroughly revolutionary class.

Such is the conclusion to which we are led by an analysis of the means of combating an inevitable catastrophe of unparalleled dimensions.

The war has created such an immense crisis, has so strained the material and moral forces of the people, has dealt such blows at the modern social organization, that humanity finds itself faced by an alternative: either it perishes, or it entrusts its fate to the most revolutionary class for the swiftest and most radical transition to a superior method of production.

Owing to a number of historical causes—the greater backwardness of Russia, the unusual hardships entailed on her by the war, the utter rottenness of tsardom and the extreme tenacity of the traditions of 1905—the revolution broke out in Russia earlier than in other countries. The result of the revolution has been that the *political* system of Russia has in a few months caught up with that of the advanced countries.

But that is not enough. The war is inexorable; it puts the alternative with ruthless severity: either perish, or overtake and outstrip the advanced countries *economically as well*.

That is possible, for we have the finished experience of a large number of advanced countries, the finished results of their technology and cul-

ture We are receiving moral support from the protest growing in Europe against the war, from the atmosphere of the growing world wide workers' revolution We are being lashed and driven forward by a revolutionary democratic freedom which is extremely rare in time of imperialist war

Perish or drive full steam ahead That is the alternative with which history confronts us

And the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry at such a moment confirm, correspondingly modifying, the old Bolshevik position, namely, to wrest the peasantry from the influence of the bourgeoisie That is the only guarantee of salvation for the revolution

And the peasantry is the most numerous *representative* of *the petty* bourgeois masses

Our Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have assumed the reac tionary function of keeping the peasantry under the influence of the bour geoisie and getting it to form a coalition with the bourgeoisie, and not with the proletariat

The masses are learning rapidly from the experience of revolution And the reactionary policy of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks is suffering bankruptcy they have been beaten in the Soviets of both cap itals A ' Left" opposition is growing in both the petty bourgeois demo cratic parties On September 10, 1917, a city conference of Socialist Rev olutionaries held in Petrograd had a two thirds majority of *Left* Social ist Revolutionaries, who incline towards an alliance with the proletariat and reject an alliance (coalition) with the bourgeoisie

The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks repeat the con trast beloved of the bourgeoisie bourgeoisie and democracy But, in essence, such a contrast is as meaningless as comparing pounds with yards

There is such a thing as a democratic bourgeoisie, and there is such a *thing as bourgeois democracy, one must be completely ignorant of both* history and political economy to deny this

The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks needed this *incor rect contrast in order to conceal* an incontestable fact, namely, that between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat there stands the *petty bourgeoisie* And, by virtue of its economic class status, *it inevitably vacillates between* the bourgeoisie and the proletariat

The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are trying to draw the petty bourgeoisie into an alliance with the bourgeoisie That is the whole meaning of their "coalition," of the coalition Cabinet and of the policy of Kerensky, a typical semi Cadet In the six months of the revolu tion this policy has suffered complete shipwreck.

The Cadets are full of malicious glee *the revolution, they say,* has suffered collapse, the revolution has been *unable* to cope either with the war or with economic ruin

That is not true. It is the *Cadets* and the *Socialist-Revolutionaries in conjunction with the Mensheviks* who have suffered collapse, for this bloc has ruled Russia for half a year, only to increase the economic ruin and entangle and aggravate the military situation.

The more complete the collapse of the *union* of the bourgeoisie with the *Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks*, the sooner will the people *learn their lesson* and the more easily will they find the *correct* way out, namely, a union of the poorest peasantry, *i.e.*, the majority of the peasantry, with the proletariat.

September 10-14, 1917

Printed in pamphlet form
at the end of October 1917

MARXISM AND INSURRECTION

A LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R S D L P

One of the most vicious and probably most widespread distortions of Marxism practised by the prevailing "Socialist" parties consists in the opportunist lie that preparations for insurrection and generally the *treatment of insurrection as an art* are "Blanquism"

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, has already earned himself a wretched notoriety by accusing Marxism of Blanquism, and when our present-day opportunists cry Blanquism they do not improve on or "enrich" the meagre "ideas" of Bernstein one jot

Marxists are accused of Blanquism for treating insurrection as an art! Can there be a more flagrant perversion of the truth, when not a single Marxist will deny that it was Marx who expressed himself on this score in the most definite, precise and categorical manner, inasmuch as it was Marx who called insurrection precisely an *art*, saying that it must be treated as an art, that the first success must be won, and that one must proceed from success to success, never ceasing the *offensive* against the enemy, taking every advantage of his confusion, etc, etc?

To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class That is the first point Insurrection must rely upon the rising revolutionary spirit of the people That is the second point Insurrection must rely upon the *crucial moment* in the history of the growing revolution, when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemies and *in the ranks of the weak, half hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution* are strongest That is the third point And these three conditions in the attitude towards insurrection distinguish *Marxism from Blanquism*

But when these conditions are operating it is a betrayal of Marxism and a betrayal of the revolution to refuse to treat insurrection as an *art*

In order to show that the present moment is one in which the Party is *obliged* to admit that *insurrection* has been placed upon the order of the day by the whole course of objective events, and that it must treat insurrection as an art, it will perhaps be best to use the method

of comparison, and to draw a parallel between July 3-4 and the September days.

On July 3-4 it was possible to argue, without transgressing against the truth, that the right thing to do was to take power, for our enemies would in any case accuse us of rebellion and treat us like rebels. However, the conclusion that we could have seized power at that time would have been wrong, because the objective conditions for a successful insurrection did not exist.

1) We still lacked the support of the class which is the vanguard of the revolution.

We still did not have a majority among the workers and soldiers of the capitals. Now, we have a majority in both Soviets. It was created *solely* by the history of July and August, by the experience of the "ruthless treatment" meted out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov affair.

2) There was no nation-wide rising revolutionary spirit at that time. There is that now, after the Kornilov affair, as is proved by the situation in the provinces and by the seizure of power by the Soviets in many localities.

3) At that time there was no *vacillation* on any serious political scale among our enemies and among the irresolute petty bourgeoisie. Now the vacillation is enormous. Our main enemy, Allied and world imperialism (for world imperialism is being led by the "Allies"), *has begun to waver* between a war to a victorious finish and a separate peace directed against Russia. Our petty-bourgeois democrats, having clearly lost their majority among the people, have begun to vacillate enormously, and have rejected a bloc, *i.e.*, a coalition, with the Cadets.

4) Therefore, an insurrection on July 3-4 would have been a mistake: we could not have retained power either physically or politically. We could not have retained it physically in spite of the fact that at certain moments Petrograd was in our hands, because at that time our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* for the possession of Petrograd. There was not at that time that "savageness," nor that fierce hatred *both of* the Kerenskys *and of* the Tseretelis and Chernovs. Our people had still not been tempered by the experience of the persecution of the Bolsheviks in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks participated.

We could not have retained power politically on July 3-4 because *before the Kornilov affair* the army and the provinces might have, and would have, marched against Petrograd.

The picture is now entirely different.

We have the following of the majority of a *class*, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it.

We have the following of the *majority* of the people, for Chernov's resignation, while by no means the only symptom, is the most striking

and obvious symptom that the peasantry *will not receive land* from the Socialist-Revolutionaries' bloc (or from the Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves) And that is the chief reason for the popular character of the revolution

We have the advantageous position of a party that firmly knows the path it must follow, whereas *imperialism as a whole* and the bloc of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are vacillating incredibly

Our victory is assured, for the people are bordering on desperation, and we are showing the people a sure way out, for during the 'Kornilov days' we demonstrated to the people the value of our leadership, and then we *proposed* to the politicians of the bloc a compromise, *which they rejected*, although their vacillations continued unremittingly

It would be a sheer mistake to think that our offer of a compromise has not *yet* been rejected, and that the "Democratic Conference" may *still* accept it The compromise was proposed by *a party to parties*, it could not have been proposed in any other way It was rejected by *parties* The Democratic Conference is a *conference*, and nothing more One thing must not be forgotten, namely, that the *majority* of the revolutionary people, the poor and embittered peasantry, are not represented in it It is a conference of *a minority of the people*—that obvious truth must not be forgotten It would be a sheer mistake, it would be sheer parliamentary cretinism on our part, were we to regard the Democratic Conference as a parliament, for even *if it were* to proclaim itself a parliament, and the sovereign parliament of the revolution, it would *not decide* anything The power of decision lies *outside it*, it lies in the working class quarters of Petrograd and Moscow

All the objective conditions for a successful insurrection exist We have the advantage of a situation in which *only* our success in the insurrection can put an end to that most painful thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out, a situation in which *only* our success in the insurrection can *foil* the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace *to the benefit* of the revolution

Finally, our Party alone *can*, by a successful insurrection, save Petrograd, for if our proposal for peace is rejected, if we do not secure even an armistice, then *we* shall become "defencists," then we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be the "*war*" party *par excellence*, and we shall fight the war in a truly revolutionary manner We shall take away all the bread and boots from the capitalists We shall leave them only crusts, we shall dress them in bast shoes We shall send all the bread and shoes to the front

And we shall save Petrograd

The resources, both material and spiritual, for a truly revolutionary war in Russia are still immense, the chances are a hundred to one that

the Germans will grant us at least an armistice. And to secure an armistice now would in itself mean to win the *whole world*.

* * *

Having recognized the absolute necessity of an insurrection of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow to save the revolution and to save Russia from being "separately" divided up among the imperialists of both coalitions, we must first adapt our political tactics at the Conference to the conditions of the growing insurrection, and, secondly, we must show that our acceptance of Marx's idea that insurrection must be treated as an art is not merely a verbal acceptance.

At the Conference we must immediately set about consolidating the Bolshevik fraction, without striving after numbers, and without fearing to leave the waverers in the camp of the waverers: they are more useful to the cause of the revolution *there* than in the camp of the resolute and devoted fighters.

We must prepare a brief declaration in the name of the Bolsheviks, sharply emphasizing the irrelevance of long speeches and of "speeches" in general, the necessity for immediate action to save the revolution, the absolute necessity for a complete break with the bourgeoisie, for the removal of the whole present government, for a complete rupture with the Anglo-French imperialists, who are preparing for a "separate" partition of Russia, and for the immediate transfer of all power *to the revolutionary democracy headed by the revolutionary proletariat.*

Our declaration must consist of the briefest and most trenchant formulation of this conclusion in accordance with the proposals of the program: peace for the peoples, land for the peasants, the confiscation of outrageous profits, and a check on the outrageous sabotage of production by the capitalists.

The briefer and more trenchant the declaration the better. Only two other important points must be clearly indicated in it, namely, that the people are worn out by vacillation, that they are exhausted by the irresoluteness of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; and that we are definitely breaking with these *parties* because they have betrayed the revolution.

And another thing. By immediately proposing a peace without annexations, by immediately breaking with the Allied imperialists and with all imperialists, either we shall at once obtain an armistice, or the entire revolutionary proletariat will rally to the defence of the country, and a truly just, truly revolutionary war will then be waged by the revolutionary democracy under the leadership of the proletariat.

Having read this declaration, and having appealed for *decisions* and not talk, for *action* and not resolution-writing, we must *dispatch* our whole fraction to the *factories and the barracks*. Their place is there; the pulse

of life is there, the source of salvation of the revolution is there, the motive force of the Democratic Conference is there

There, in ardent and impassioned speeches, we must explain our program and put the alternative either the Conference adopts it *in its entirety* or else insurrection There is no middle course Delay is impossible The revolution is perishing

By putting the question thus, by *concentrating our entire fraction* on the factories and barracks, *we shall be able to decide the right moment to launch the insurrection*

And in order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, *i e* , as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a *single moment, organize* a *staff* of the insurgent detachments, we must distribute our forces, we must move the reliable regiments to the most important points, we must surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre,* we must occupy the Peter and Paul fortress,** we must arrest the General Staff and the government, we must move against the junkers and the Savage Division *** such detachments as will rather die than allow the enemy to approach the centre of the city, we must mobilize the armed workers and call upon them to engage in a last desperate fight, we must occupy the telegraph and telephone stations at once, quarter *our* staff of the insurrection at the central telephone station and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution, *without treating insurrection as an art*

September 26 27 [13 14] 1917

First printed in 1921
in *Proletarskaya Revolutsia No 2*

---

* *The Alexandrinsky Theatre*—the theatre in Petrograd where the Democratic Conference was in session —*Ed*

** *The Peter and Paul Fortress*—the fortress in which revolutionaries were incarcerated by the tsarist regime —*Ed*

*** *The Savage Division*—a division consisting of Caucasian highlanders which Kornilov (see footnote to this volume p 85) attempted to employ for an onslaught against revolutionary Petrograd —*Ed*

THE TASKS OF THE REVOLUTION

Russia is a petty-bourgeois country. The vast majority of the population belongs to this class. Its vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are inevitable. Only when it joins the proletariat will the victory of the cause of the revolution, of the cause of peace, freedom and land for the toilers be ensured—easily, peacefully, swiftly and smoothly.

The course of our revolution reveals these vacillations in practice. Let us then not harbour any illusions about the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties; let us keep firmly to our class proletarian path. The poverty of the poor peasants, the horrors of the war and the horrors of famine are all bringing it home to the masses more and more that the proletarian path is the correct one and that they must support the proletarian revolution.

The "peaceful" petty-bourgeois hopes for a "coalition" with the bourgeoisie, for compromises with it, for the possibility of "calmly" waiting for the "early" convocation of the Constituent Assembly and so forth are being mercilessly, cruelly and implacably shattered by the course of the revolution. The Kornilov affair was the last cruel lesson, a great lesson, supplementing thousands and thousands of small lessons, lessons in the deception practised on the workers and peasants in the localities by the capitalists and landlords, in the deception practised on the soldiers by the officers, and so on and so forth.

Discontent, indignation and anger are spreading in the army and among the peasants and workers. The "coalition" of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie, which promises everything and does nothing, is irritating the masses, opening their eyes to the truth and driving them to revolt.

The opposition of the Lefts is growing among the Socialist-Revolutionaries (Spiridonova and others) and among the Mensheviks (Martov and others) and already embraces 40 per cent of the "council" and the "congress" of these parties, while *below*, among the proletariat and the peasantry, particularly the poor peasantry, the *majority* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are "*Lefts*."

The Kornilov affair is instructive. The Kornilov affair has proved very instructive.

One does not know whether the Soviets can now go farther than the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and thus ensure a peaceful development of the *revolution*, or *whether they will* continue to stand still and thus render a proletarian revolt inevitable.

That no one knows.

It is our business to help in every possible way to secure a "last" chance for a peaceful development of the revolution. We can help to bring this about by expounding our program, by explaining its popular character and its absolute harmony with the interests and demands of the vast majority of the population

The following lines are an attempt to expound such a program

Let us carry this program more to the "rank and file," to the masses, to the office employees, to the workers, to the *peasants, not only to our* own followers, but particularly to those who follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, to the non-party elements, to the unenlightened Let us endeavour *to rouse them to think independently, to make their own decisions*, to send *their own* delegations to the Conference, to the Soviets, to the government Then our work will not have been in vain, *no matter what the outcome of the Conference may be It will prove useful for* the Conference, for the elections to the Constituent Assembly, and for all political activity generally.

Life is proving that the Bolshevik program and tactics are correct April 20 to the Kornilov affair—how brief a period, but how replete with events!

And during that span experience taught a great deal to the *masses*, to the *oppressed* classes, and the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have completely parted ways with the masses. This will be revealed best of all by a very detailed program, *if we succeed in* securing its discussion by the masses.

THE FATAL DANGER OF COMPROMISE WITH THE CAPITALISTS

1. *To leave representatives of the bourgeoisie, even a few, in power*, to leave such notorious Kornilovites in power as Generals Alexeyev, Klembovsky, Bagratiyon and Gagarin, or such as have proved their utter impotence with regard to the *bourgeoisie and their ability to act as* Bonapartists, like Kerensky, is to throw the door wide open, on the one hand, to famine and inevitable economic catastrophe, which the capitalists are deliberately *accelerating and accentuating*, and, on the other, to a military catastrophe, for the army hates the General Staff and has no enthusiasm for the imperialist war Moreover, if the Kornilovite generals and officers remain in power *they will undoubtedly open the front to the Germans deliberately*, as they did in the case of Galicia and Riga Only by the formation of a new government on a new basis, as explained

below, can this be prevented. After all we have gone through since April 20, were the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks to continue any kind of compromise with the bourgeoisie it would be not only a mistake but a direct betrayal of the people and the revolution.

POWER TO THE SOVIETS

2. The entire power in the state must pass exclusively to the representatives of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies in accordance with a definite program, and the government must be fully accountable to them. New elections to the Soviets must be held immediately, so as both to register the experience of the whole people during the past few weeks of revolution, which have been so rich in events, and to remove the crying injustices that have in places remained uncorrected (non-proportional and unequal elections, etc.).

In the localities where democratically elected institutions do not yet exist, and in the army, the power must pass exclusively to the local Soviets and to Commissars elected by them, or to other institutions, provided they are elected bodies.

The workers and the revolutionary troops, *i.e.*, those troops who have in practice proved their ability to suppress the Kornilovites, must be unconditionally and universally armed with the full support of the state.

PEACE TO THE NATIONS

3. The Soviet government must *immediately* make proposals to *all* the belligerent nations (*i.e.*, simultaneously both to their governments and to the worker and peasant masses) for the conclusion without delay of a general peace on democratic conditions, as well as an immediate armistice (at least for three months).

The chief condition of a democratic peace is the renunciation of annexations—not in the mistaken sense that all the powers are to receive back what they have lost, but in the only correct sense that *every* nationality, without a single exception, both in Europe and in the colonies, shall obtain freedom and the opportunity to decide for itself whether it shall become a *separate* state or whether it shall form part of any other state.

While proposing these conditions of peace, the Soviet government must itself immediately proceed to put them into effect, *i.e.*, to publish and repudiate the secret treaties by which we are still bound, treaties which were concluded by the tsar and which promise the Russian capitalists the pillage of Turkey, Austria, etc. Then, it is our duty immediately to satisfy the demands of the Ukrainians and the Finns; we must guarantee them, as well as all the other non-Russian nationalities in

Russia, full freedom, even including freedom of secession, the same must apply to the *whole* of Armenia, which we must undertake to evacuate, as well as the Turkish territory occupied by us, and so forth

Such conditions of peace will not be favourably received by the capitalists, but they will be greeted by all the nations with such tremendous sympathy, they will arouse such a great and historic outburst of enthusiasm and such universal indignation against the prolongation of this predatory war, that it is most probable that we shall at once obtain an armistice and consent to the opening of peace negotiations For the workers' revolution against the war is irresistibly growing everywhere and it can be advanced not by talk of peace (with which the workers and peasants have so long been deceived by *all* the imperialist governments, including our own, the Kerensky government) but by a rupture with the capitalists and the proposal of peace

In the least probable event, *viz* , if not a single belligerent country consents even to an armistice, then, as far as we are concerned, the war will really become an enforced war, a really just and defensive war The mere realization of this fact by the proletariat and the poor peasantry will make Russia many times stronger even from the military point of view, especially after a complete rupture with the capitalists, who are fleecing the people, not to mention that under such conditions the war on our part will in fact, and not only in name, be a war in alliance with the oppressed classes of all countries, a war in alliance with the oppressed nations of the whole world

In particular, the people must be cautioned against the assertion of the capitalists which sometimes influences the more timorous and the philistines, that in the event of a rupture of our present predatory alliance with the British and other capitalists the latter are capable of doing serious damage to the Russian revolution This assertion is utterly false, for the "financial support of the Allies," while enriching the bankers, "supports" the Russian workers and peasants in the same way as rope supports a hanged man There is enough grain, coal, oil and iron in Russia, all that is required for the proper distribution of these products is to get rid of the landlords and capitalists, who are robbing the people As to the danger of a war against the Russian people by its present Allies, the assumption that the French and Italians are capable of combining their armies with the German in order to attack Russia, after she has proposed a just peace, is obviously absurd, and as for England, America and Japan, even were they to proclaim war on Russia (which would be extremely difficult for them to do, both in view of the unpopularity of such a war among the masses and in view of the divergence of the material interests of the capitalists of these countries over the partition of Asia, and particularly over the fleecing of China), they could not cause Russia a hundredth part of the damage and misery which the war with Germany, Austria, and Turkey is causing

LAND TO THE TOILERS

4. The Soviet government must immediately proclaim the abolition of private property in the landed estates without compensation, and place these lands under the control of peasant committees, pending a decision of the Constituent Assembly. These peasant committees shall also be entrusted with the control of the farm property of the landlords, on the absolute condition that it be placed first and foremost at the disposal of the poor peasants free of charge.

These measures, which the vast majority of the peasants have long been demanding both in the resolutions of their congresses and in hundreds of mandates from the localities (as may be seen, for instance, from the summary of 242 mandates published in the *Izvestia of the Soviet of Peasants' Deputies*), are absolutely essential and urgent. No further delays, from which the peasantry suffered so much at the time of the "coalition" government, can be tolerated.

Any government that delayed putting these measures into effect would have to be recognized as a government *hostile to the people* and deserving of being overthrown and crushed by a revolt of the workers and peasants. Conversely, only a government that carried these measures into effect would be a government of the people.

MEASURES AGAINST FAMINE AND ECONOMIC CHAOS

5. The Soviet government must immediately introduce workers' control over production and consumption on a national scale. As experience since May 6 has shown, without such control all promises of reform and all attempts at reform are futile, and the country is threatened from week to week with famine and an unparalleled catastrophe.

The banks and the insurance business, as well as the more important branches of industry (oil, coal, iron and steel, sugar, etc.) must immediately be nationalized. This must be accompanied by the absolute abolition of commercial secrecy and the establishment of strict supervision by the workers and peasants over the insignificant minority of capitalists who are waxing rich on government contracts and who evade furnishing returns and the fair taxation of their profits and property.

These measures, which will not deprive the middle peasants, the Cossacks or the small artisans of a single farthing of their property, are absolutely fair from the point of view of the equitable distribution of the burdens of the war and urgent as measures against famine. Only by curbing the marauding practices of the capitalists and by putting a stop to their deliberate interruption of production will it be possible to increase the productivity of labour, establish universal labour service, regulate the exchange of grain for industrial products, and secure the return to the treasury of many billions of paper money now concealed by the wealthy.

Unless these measures are taken, the abolition of private property in the landed estates without compensation will also be impossible, for the landed estates are for the most part mortgaged to the banks, and the interests of the landlords and capitalists are inseparably interwoven

The recent resolution of the Economic Section of the All Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers Deputies (*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No 152) admits not only the "*fatalness*" of the government's measures (such as the raising of grain prices with the purpose of enriching the landlords and kulaks), not only "the fact of the *complete inactivity* of the central bodies set up under the government for the regulation of economic life," but even the "*violation of the law*" by that government Such an admission by government parties, the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, is one more proof of the criminal nature of the policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie

MEASURES AGAINST THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION OF THE LANDLORDS AND CAPITALISTS

6 The Kornilov and Kaledin revolt* was supported by the entire landlord and capitalist class, headed by the party of the Cadets (the "National Freedom" Party) This has been fully proved by the facts published in the *Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee*

But nothing has been done to completely suppress this counter revolution, or even to investigate it, and nothing of any value can be done unless the power passes to the Soviets No commission is capable of instituting a full enquiry, of arresting the guilty, etc , unless it is vested with government powers This can and must be done only by a Soviet government Only such a government, by arresting the Kornilovite generals and the ringleaders of the bourgeois counter revolution (Guchkov, Milyukov, Ryabushinsky, Maklakov and Co), by disbanding the counter revolutionary organizations (the State Duma, the officers' leagues, etc), by placing their members under the surveillance of the local Soviets, and by disbanding the counter-revolutionary regiments, can make Russia secure against an inevitable repetition of "Kornilov" attempts

Only such a government can set up a commission for the complete and public investigation of the Kornilov case, as well as of all other cases, even those which have been brought by the bourgeoisie, and only to such a commission would the Bolshevik Party, in its turn, call upon the workers to accord full obedience and co operation

* *The Kaledin Revolt*—the counter revolutionary uprising at the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 of the upper stratum of the Don Cossacks led by General A M Kaledin —*Ed*

Only a Soviet government can successfully combat such a flagrant injustice as the seizure by the capitalists, with the aid of the millions filched from the people, of the larger printing plants and the majority of the newspapers. The bourgeois counter-revolutionary papers (*Rech*, *Russkoye Slovo* [*Russian Word*], etc.) must be suppressed and their printing plants confiscated, private advertisements in the papers must be proclaimed a state monopoly and transferred to the government paper published by the Soviets, which tells the peasants the truth. Only in this way can, and must, this powerful medium of lying and slandering with impunity, deceiving the people, misleading the peasantry, and preparing for counter-revolution be wrested from the hands of the bourgeoisie.

PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVOLUTION

7. The democracy of Russia, the Soviets and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties now have the opportunity—one very seldom to be met with in the history of revolutions—of ensuring the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the appointed date without fresh delays, of saving the country from military and economic catastrophe, and of securing a peaceful development of the revolution.

If the Soviets were now to take the full and exclusive power of the state into their own hands with the purpose of carrying out the program set forth above, they could not only be sure of the support of nine-tenths of the population of Russia—the working class and the vast majority ‹ the peasantry—but could also be sure of the greatest revolutionary enthus asm on the part of the army and the majority of the people, without whi‹ victory over famine and war is impossible.

There could now be no question of resistance being offered to the Sovi if they themselves did not vacillate. No class would dare to raise a reb lion against the Soviets, and the landlords and capitalists, chastened the experience of the Kornilov affair, would peacefully surrender power upon the ultimatum of the Soviets. To overcome the resistance of the capitalists to the program of the Soviets, it would be sufficient to establish supervision by the workers and peasants over the exploiters and to punish refractory persons by such measures as the confiscation of their entire property coupled with a short term of imprisonment.

By seizing power now—and this is probably their last chance—the Soviets could still ensure the peaceful development of the revolution, the peaceful election of deputies by the people, the peaceful struggle of parties within the Soviets, the testing of the programs of the various parties in practice, and the peaceful transfer of power from party to party.

If this opportunity is allowed to slip, the entire course of development of the revolution, from the movement of April 20 to the Kornilov affair, points to the inevitability of a most acute civil war between the bourgeoisie

Unless these measures are taken, the abolition of private property in the landed estates without compensation will also be impossible, for the landed estates are for the most part mortgaged to the banks, and the interests of the landlords and capitalists are inseparably interwoven

The recent resolution of the Economic Section of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No 152) admits not only the "*fatalness*" of the government's measures (such as the raising of grain prices with the purpose of enriching the landlords and kulaks), not only "the fact of the *complete inactivity* of the central bodies set up under the government for the regulation of economic life," but even the "*violation of the law*" by that government. Such an admission by government parties, the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, is one more proof of the criminal nature of the policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie.

MEASURES AGAINST THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION OF THE LANDLORDS AND CAPITALISTS

6 The Kornilov and Kaledin revolt* was supported by the entire landlord and capitalist class, headed by the party of the Cadets (the "National Freedom" Party) This has been fully proved by the facts published in the *Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee.*

But nothing has been done to completely suppress this counter revolution, or even to investigate it, and nothing of any value can be done unless the power passes to the Soviets. No commission is capable of instituting a full enquiry, of arresting the guilty, etc , unless it is vested with government powers This can and must be done only by a Soviet government Only such a government, by arresting the Kornilovite generals and the ringleaders of the bourgeois counter-revolution (Guchkov, Milyukov, Ryabushinsky, Maklakov and Co), by disbanding the counter-revolutionary organizations (the State Duma, the officers' leagues, etc), by placing their members under the surveillance of the local Soviets, and by disbanding the counter-revolutionary regiments, can make Russia secure against an inevitable repetition of "Kornilov" attempts

Only such a government can set up a commission for the complete and public investigation of the Kornilov case, as well as of all other cases, even those which have been brought by the bourgeoisie, and only to such a commission would the Bolshevik Party, in its turn, call upon the workers to accord full obedience and co operation

* *The Kaledin Revolt*—the counter revolutionary uprising at the end of 1917 and the beginning of 1918 of the upper stratum of the Don Cossacks led by General A M Kaledin —*Ed*

Only a Soviet government can successfully combat such a flagrant injustice as the seizure by the capitalists, with the aid of the millions filched from the people, of the larger printing plants and the majority of the newspapers. The bourgeois counter-revolutionary papers (*Rech*, *Russkoye Slovo* [*Russian Word*], etc.) must be suppressed and their printing plants confiscated, private advertisements in the papers must be proclaimed a state monopoly and transferred to the government paper published by the Soviets, which tells the peasants the truth. Only in this way can, and must, this powerful medium of lying and slandering with impunity, deceiving the people, misleading the peasantry, and preparing for counter-revolution be wrested from the hands of the bourgeoisie.

PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVOLUTION

7. The democracy of Russia, the Soviets and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties now have the opportunity—one very seldom to be met with in the history of revolutions—of ensuring the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the appointed date without fresh delays, of saving the country from military and economic catastrophe, and of securing a peaceful development of the revolution.

If the Soviets were now to take the full and exclusive power of the state into their own hands with the purpose of carrying out the program set forth above, they could not only be sure of the support of nine-tenths of the population of Russia—the working class and the vast majority of the peasantry—but could also be sure of the greatest revolutionary enthusiasm on the part of the army and the majority of the people, without which victory over famine and war is impossible.

There could now be no question of resistance being offered to the Soviets if they themselves did not vacillate. No class would dare to raise a rebellion against the Soviets, and the landlords and capitalists, chastened by the experience of the Kornilov affair, would peacefully surrender power upon the ultimatum of the Soviets. To overcome the resistance of the capitalists to the program of the Soviets, it would be sufficient to establish supervision by the workers and peasants over the exploiters and to punish refractory persons by such measures as the confiscation of their entire property coupled with a short term of imprisonment.

By seizing power now—and this is probably their last chance—the Soviets could still ensure the peaceful development of the revolution, the peaceful election of deputies by the people, the peaceful struggle of parties within the Soviets, the testing of the programs of the various parties in practice, and the peaceful transfer of power from party to party.

If this opportunity is allowed to slip, the entire course of development of the revolution, from the movement of April 20 to the Kornilov affair, points to the inevitability of a most acute civil war between the bourgeoisie

and the proletariat. Inevitable catastrophe will bring this war nearer. To judge by all the facts and considerations comprehensible to the mind of man, this war is bound to terminate in the complete victory of the working class and its support by the poor peasantry in carrying out the program set forth above. But the war may prove extremely arduous and bloody and cost the lives of tens of thousands of landlords and capitalists and army officers who sympathize with them. The proletariat will stop at no sacrifice to save the revolution, which is impossible apart from the program set forth above. But the proletariat would support the Soviets in every way if they were to avail themselves of their last chance of securing a peaceful development of the revolution.

Rabochi Put (*Workers' Path*) Nos. 20 and 21,
October 9 and 10 [September 26 and 27], 1917

ADVICE OF AN ONLOOKER

I am writing these lines on October 8 and have but little hope that they will reach the Petrograd comrades by the 9th. It is possible that they will arrive too late, since the Congress of the Northern Soviets has been fixed for October 10. Nevertheless, I shall try to give my "Advice of an Onlooker" in the event that the probable action of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and of the whole "region" will take place soon but has not taken place yet.

It is clear that all power must pass to the Soviets. It should be equally indisputable for every Bolshevik that the revolutionary proletarian power (or the Bolshevik power—which is now one and the same thing) is assured of the ardent sympathy and unreserved support of all the toilers and exploited all over the world in general, in the warring countries in particular, and among the Russian peasantry especially. There is no point in dwelling on these all too well known and long demonstrated truths.

What must be dwelt on is something that is probably not quite clear to all comrades, *viz.*, that the transfer of power to the Soviets in practice now implies armed insurrection. This would seem obvious, but not all have pondered or are pondering over the point. To renounce armed insurrection now would be to renounce the chief slogan of Bolshevism (All Power to the Soviets) and revolutionary-proletarian internationalism in general.

But armed insurrection is a *special* form of the political struggle, one subject to special rules which must be attentively pondered over. Karl Marx expressed this truth with remarkable clarity when he wrote that armed *"insurrection is an art quite as much as war."*

Of the principal rules of this art, Marx noted the following:

1) Never *play* with insurrection, but when beginning it firmly realize that you must *go to the end.*

2) You must concentrate *a great superiority of forces* at the decisive point, at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organization, will destroy the insurgents.

3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, take the *offensive.* "The defensive is the death of every armed rising."

4) You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered

5) You must strive for *daily* successes, even if small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain *"moral ascendancy."*

Marx summarized the lessons of all revolutions in respect to armed insurrection in the words of Danton, "the greatest master of revolutionary tactics yet known": "audacity, audacity, and once again audacity."

Applied to Russia and to October 1917, this means: a simultaneous offensive on Petrograd, as sudden and as rapid as possible, which must without fail be carried out from within and from without, from the working-class quarters and from Finland, from Reval and from Kronstadt, an offensive of the *whole* fleet, the concentration of a *gigantic superiority* of forces over the 15,000 or 20,000 (perhaps more) of our "bourgeois guard" (the junkers), our "Vendean troops"* (a part of the Cossacks), etc

Our *t h r e e* main forces—the navy, the workers, and the army units—must be so combined as to occupy without fail and to hold *at the cost of any sacrifice* a) the telephone exchange, b) the telegraph office, c) the railway stations, d) above all, the bridges

The *most determined* elements (our "storm troops" and *young workers* as well as the best of the sailors) must be formed into small detachments to occupy all the more important points and to *take part* everywhere in all decisive operations, for example

To encircle and cut off Petrograd, to seize it by a combined attack of the navy, the workers, and the troops—a task which requires *art and triple audacity*

To form detachments composed of the best workers, armed with rifles and bombs, for the purpose of attacking and surrounding the "centres" of the enemy (the junker schools, the telegraph office, the telephone exchange, etc) Their watchword must be *"Rather perish to a man than let the enemy pass!"*

Let us hope that if action is decided on, the leaders will successfully apply the great precepts of Danton and Marx

The success of the Russian and world revolutions will depend on two, three days of fighting.

Written October 21 [8] 1917

First published in
Pravda No 250,
November 7, 1920

---

* *"Vendean troops* —synonymous of counter revolutionary troops The department of Vendée, in central west France, was one of the hotbeds of the counter revolutionary uprising of the peasantry during the bourgeois revolution in France at the end of the eighteenth century —*Ed*

RESOLUTION ON THE ARMED UPRISING

The Central Committee recognizes that the international position of the Russian revolution (the revolt in the German navy which is an extreme manifestation of the growth throughout Europe of the world Socialist revolution; the threat of the imperialist world with the object of strangling the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the indubitable decision of the Russian bourgeoisie and Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans), and the fact that the proletarian party has gained a majority in the Soviets—all this, taken in conjunction with the peasant revolt and the swing of popular confidence towards our Party (the elections in Moscow), and, finally, the obvious preparations being made for a second Kornilov affair (the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the dispatch of Cossacks to Petrograd, the surrounding of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.)—all this places the armed uprising on the order of the day.

Considering therefore that an armed uprising is inevitable, and that the time for it is fully ripe, the Central Committee instructs all Party organizations to be guided accordingly, and to discuss and decide all practical questions (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the action of our people in Moscow and Minsk, etc.) from this point of view.

Written October 10, 1917

First published in
Prozhektor (*Searchlight*) No. 12 (42),
October 31, 1924

A LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

Comrades,

I have not yet been able to receive the Petrograd papers for Wednesday, October 18 When the full text of Kamenev's and Zinoviev's statement in the *Novaya Zhizn* (*New Life*), which is not a Party paper, was transmitted to me by telephone, I refused to believe it But doubt proved to be out of the question, and I am obliged to take this opportunity so that this letter may reach the members of the Party by Thursday evening or Friday morning; for to remain silent in the face of such unheard of *strike breaking* would be a crime

The more serious the practical problem, and the more responsible and "prominent" the persons guilty of strike-breaking, the more dangerous it is, the more resolutely must the strike-breakers be ejected, and the more unpardonable would it be to hesitate even in consideration of the past "services" of the strike-breakers.

Just think of it! It is known in Party circles that ever since September the Party has been discussing the question of an uprising Nobody has ever heard of a single letter or leaflet by either of the persons named! Now, on the eve, one might say, of the Congress of Soviets, two prominent Bolsheviks come out *against* the majority, and, obviously, *against the Central Committee* That is not said in so many words, but the harm done to the cause is all the greater, for to speak in hints is even more dangerous

It is perfectly clear from the text of Kamenev's and Zinoviev's statement that they have gone against the Central Committee, for otherwise their statement would be meaningless. But they do not say *what* specific decision of the Central Committee they are disputing

Why?

The reason is obvious because it has not been published by the Central Committee

What does this come down to?

On a burning question of supreme importance, on the eve of the critical day of October 20, two "prominent Bolsheviks" attack an *un* published decision of the Party centre and attack it *not* in the Party press but, in a paper which on this question is *hand in glove with the bourgeoisie against the workers' party*!

Why, this is a thousand times more despicable and a *million times more harmful* than all the utterances Plekhanov, for example, made in the non-Party press in 1906-07, which the Party so sharply condemned. For at that time it was only a question of elections, whereas now it is a question of an uprising for the capture of power!

And on such a question, *after* a decision has been taken by the centre, to dispute this *unpublished* decision before the Rodzyankos and Kerenskys in a non-Party paper—can one imagine anything more treacherous, a more heinous act of strike-breaking?

I should consider it disgraceful on my part if I were to hesitate to condemn these former comrades because of my former close relations with them. I declare outright that I no longer consider either of them comrades and that I will fight with all my might, both in the Central Committee and at the congress, to secure the expulsion of both of them from the Party.

For a workers' party which the facts of the situation are confronting more and more frequently with the necessity of an uprising cannot accomplish that difficult task if unpublished decisions of the centre, after their adoption, are to be disputed in the non-Party press, and vacillation and confusion brought into the ranks of the fighters.

Let Messrs. Zinoviev and Kamenev found their own party from the dozens of disoriented people or from candidates to the Constituent Assembly. The workers will not join such a party, for its first slogan will be:

"Members of the Central Committee who are defeated at a meeting of the Central Committee on the question of a decisive fight are permitted to resort to the non-Party press for the purpose of attacking the unpublished decisions of the Party."

Let them build themselves *such* a party; our workers' Bolshevik Party will only gain thereby.

When all the documents are published, the strike-breaking act of Zinoviev and Kamenev will stand out still more glaringly. Meanwhile, let the following question engage the attention of the workers:

Let us assume that the Executive Committee of an all-Russian trade union had decided, after a month of deliberation and by a majority of over 80 per cent, that preparations must be made for a strike, but that for the time being neither the date nor any other details should be divulged. Let us assume that, *after* the decision had been taken, two members, under the false pretext of a "dissenting opinion," not only began to write to the local groups urging a reconsideration of the decision, but also permitted their letters to be communicated to *non*-Party newspapers. Let us assume, finally, that they themselves attacked the decision in non-Party papers, although it had not yet been published, and began to denounce the strike to the capitalists.

We ask, would the workers hesitate to expel such strike-breakers from their midst?

* * *

As to the question of an uprising now, when October 20 is so close at hand, I cannot from afar judge to what extent the cause has been damaged by the strike breaking statement in the non Party press There is no doubt that very great *practical* damage has been done In order to remedy the situation, it is first necessary to restore unity in the Bolshevik front by expelling the strike breakers

The weakness of the ideological arguments against an uprising will become the clearer, the more we drag them into the light of day I recently sent an article on this question to the *Rabochi Put,** and if the editors do not find it possible to print it, members of the Party will probably acquaint themselves with it in the manuscript **

The so called "ideological" arguments reduce themselves to two

First that it is necessary to "wait" for the Constituent Assembly Let us wait, maybe we can hold on until then—that is the whole argument Maybe, despite famine, despite economic ruin, despite the fact that the patience of the soldiers is exhausted, despite Rodzyanko s measures to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, even despite the lockouts, perhaps we can hold on

Perhaps and maybe—that is the whole point of the argument

The second is a shrill pessimism Everything is well with the bourgeoisie and Kerensky, everything is wrong with us The capitalists have everything wonderfully in hand, everything is wrong with the workers The "pessimists" as to the military side of the matter are shouting at the top of their voices, but the "optimists" are silent, for to disclose things to Rodzyanko and Kerensky is hardly pleasant to anybody but strike breakers

* * *

Difficult times A serious task A grave betrayal

Nevertheless, the task will be accomplished, the workers will consolidate their ranks, the peasant revolt and the extreme impatience of the soldiers at the front will do their work! Let us close our ranks tighter—the proletariat must win!

Written October 31 [18] 1917

First published in
Pravda No 250
November 1, 1927

---

* *Rabochi Put* (*Workers Path*)—central press organ of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks) as from September 16 1917 to November 8, 1917 —*Ed*

** See "A Letter to the Comrades " Lenin, *Selected Works* Eng ed Vol VI p 304 —*Ed*

A LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Comrades,

I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th. The situation is critical in the extreme. It is absolutely clear that to delay the uprising now will be fatal.

I exhort my comrades with all my strength to realize that everything now hangs on a thread; that we are being confronted by problems which cannot be solved by conferences or congresses (even congresses of Soviets), but exclusively by peoples, by the masses, by the struggle of the armed masses.

The bourgeois onslaught of the Kornilovites and the removal of Verkhovsky show that we must not wait. We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, first disarming the junkers (defeating them, if they resist), and so forth.

We must not wait!! We may lose everything!!

The value of the seizure of power immediately will be the defence of the *people* (not of the congress, but of the people, the army and the peasants in the first place) from the Kornilovite governmnent, which has driven out Verkhovsky* and has hatched a second Kornilov plot.

Who must take power?

That is not important at present. Let the Revolutionary Military Committee take it, or "some other institution" which will declare that it will relinquish the power only to the true representatives of the interests of the people, the interests of the army (the immediate proposal of peace), the interests of the peasants (the land to be taken immediately and private property abolished), the interests of the starving.

All districts, all regiments, all forces must be mobilized at once and must immediately send their delegations to the Revolutionary Military Committee and to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks with the insistent demand that under no circumstances must the power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th—not under any circumstances;

* The reference here is to the removal of Verkhovsky, the Minister of War in the Provisional Government, for his statement that the Russian army was no longer in a fit condition to continue the war.—*Ed.*

First of all we examine Marx's and Engels' doctrine of the state and deal in particular detail with those aspects of their doctrine which have been forgotten or have been opportunistically distorted Then we analyse separately the chief representatives of these distortions, Karl Kautsky, the best-known leader of the Second International (1889-1914), which has suffered such miserable bankruptcy in the present war Finally, we sum up, in the main, the experiences of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and particularly of that of 1917. Apparently, the latter is now (beginning of August 1917) completing the first stage of its development, but, generally speaking, this revolution as a whole can only be regarded as a link in a chain of Socialist proletarian revolutions called forth by the imperialist war. Hence, the question of the relation of the Socialist proletarian revolution to the state acquires, not only practical political importance, but the importance of an urgent problem of the day, the problem of explaining to the masses what they will have to do to emancipate themselves from the yoke of capitalism in the very near future

August 1917 *The Author*

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The present, second edition is published almost without change, except that section 3 has been added to Chapter II

The Author

Moscow
December 17, 1918

CHAPTER I

CLASS SOCIETY AND THE STATE

1. The State as the Product of the Irreconcilability of Class Antagonisms

What is now happening to Marx's doctrine has, in the course of history, often happened to the doctrines of other revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation. During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes hound them constantly, attack their doctrines with the most savage malice, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaign of lies and slander. After their death, attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonise them, so to say, and to surround their *names* with a certain halo for the "consolation" of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping them, while at the same time emasculating the revolutionary doctrine of its *content*, vulgarizing it and blunting its revolutionary edge. At the present time, the bourgeoisie and the opportunists in the labour movement concur in this revision of Marxism. They omit, obliterate and distort the revolutionary side of its doctrine, its revolutionary soul. They push to the foreground and extol what is or seems acceptable to the bourgeoisie. All the social-chauvinists are now "Marxists" (don't laugh!). And more and more frequently, German bourgeois scholars, erstwhile specialists in the extermination of Marxism, are speaking of the "national-German" Marx, who, they aver, trained the labour unions which are so splendidly organized for the purpose of conducting a predatory war!

In such circumstances, in view of the incredibly widespread nature of the distortions of Marxism, our first task is to *restore* the true doctrine of Marx on the state. For this purpose it will be necessary to quote at length from the works of Marx and Engels. Of course, long quotations will make the text cumbersome and will not help to make it popular reading, but we cannot possibly avoid them. All, or at any rate, all the most essential passages in the works of Marx and Engels on the subject of the state must necessarily be given as fully as possible, in order that the reader may form an independent opinion on the totality of views of the founders of scientific Socialism and on the development of those views, and in order that their distortion by the now prevailing "Kautskyism" may be documentarily proved and clearly demonstrated.

Let us begin with the most popular of Engels' works, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, the sixth edition of which was pub lished in Stuttgart as far back as 1894 We must translate the quotations from the German originals, as the Russian translations, although very nu merous, are for the most part either incomplete or very unsatisfactory

Summing up his historical analysis, Engels says

> "The state is therefore by no means a power imposed on society from the outside, just as little is it 'the reality of the moral idea, 'the image and reality of reason,' as Hegel asserts Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development, it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it is cleft into irreconcilable antagon isms, which it is powerless to dispel But in order that these antagon isms, classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in sterile struggle, a power apparently standing above society became necessary for the purpose of moderating the conflict and keeping it within the bounds of 'order', and this power, arising out of society, but placing itself above it, and increas ingly alienating itself from it, is the state" (pp 177-178 of the sixth German edition)

This fully expresses the basic idea of Marxism on the question of the historical role and meaning of the state The state is the product and the manifestation of the *irreconcilability* of class antagonisms The state arises when, where and to the extent that class antagonisms *cannot* be objectively reconciled And, conversely, the existence of the state proves that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable

It is precisely on this most important and fundamental point that dis tortions of Marxism, proceeding along two main lines, begin

On the one hand, the bourgeois ideologists, and particularly the petty bourgeois ideologists, compelled by the pressure of indisputable historical facts to admit that the state only exists where there are class antagonisms and the class struggle, "correct" Marx in a way that makes it appear that the state is an organ for the *conciliation* of classes According to Marx, the state could neither arise nor continue to exist if it were possible to conciliate classes According to the petty bourgeois and philistine profes sors and publicists—frequently on the strength of well meaning references to Marx!—the state conciliates classes According to Marx, the state is an organ of class *rule*, an organ for the *oppression* of one class by another, it creates "order," which legalizes and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collisions between the classes In the opinion of the petty-

[illegible] classes and not the

fighting to overthrow the oppressors.

For instance, when, in the Revolution of 1917, the question of the real meaning and role of the state arose in all its magnitude as a practical question demanding immediate action on a wide mass scale, all the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks immediately and completely sank to the petty-bourgeois theory that the "state" "conciliates" classes. Innumerable resolutions and articles by politicians of both these parties are thoroughly saturated with this purely petty-bourgeois and philistine "conciliation" theory. The fact that the state is the organ of the rule of a definite class which *cannot* be reconciled with its antipode (the class opposite to it), this the petty-bourgeois democrats will never be able to understand. Their attitude towards the state is one of the most striking proofs that our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are not Socialists at all (which we Bolsheviks have always maintained), but petty-bourgeois democrats with near-Socialist phraseology.

On the other hand, the "Kautskyite" distortion of Marxism is far more subtle. "Theoretically," it is not denied that the state is the organ of class rule, or that class antagonisms are irreconcilable. But what is lost sight of or glossed over is this: if the state is the product of irreconcilable class antagonisms, if it is a power standing *above* society and "*increasingly alienating* itself from it," it is clear that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, *but also without the destruction* of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class and which is the embodiment of this "alienation." As we shall see later, Marx very definitely drew this theoretically self-evident conclusion from a concrete historical analysis of the tasks of the revolution. And—as we shall show fully in our subsequent remarks—it is precisely this conclusion which Kautsky ... has "forgotten" and distorted.

2. *Special Bodies of Armed Men, Prisons, etc.*

Engels continues:

> "As against the ancient gentile organization, the primary distinguishing feature of the state is the division of the subjects of the state *according to territory.*"

Such a division seems "natural" to us, but it cost prolonged struggle against the old form of tribal or gentile society.

> "... The second is the establishment of a *public power*, which is no longer directly identical with the population organizing itself as an armed power. This special public power is necessary, because a self-acting armed organization of the population has become impossible since the cleavage into classes.... This public power exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed men, but of

material appendages, prisons and coercive institutions of all kinds, of which gentile society knew nothing . . ." '

Engels further elucidates the concept of the "power" which is termed the state—a power which arises from society, but which places itself above it and becomes more and more alienated from it What does this power mainly consist of? It consists of special bodies of armed men which have prisons, etc , at their disposal

We are justified in speaking of special bodies of armed men, because the public power which is an attribute of every state is not "directly identical" with the armed population, with its "self acting armed organization "

Like all the great revolutionary thinkers, Engels tries to draw the attention of the class-conscious workers to the very fact which prevailing philistinism regards as least worthy of attention, as the most common and sanctified, not only by long standing, but one might say by petrified prejudices A standing army and police are the chief instruments of state power But can it be otherwise?

From the point of view of the vast majority of Europeans of the end of the nineteenth century whom Engels was addressing, and who have not lived through or closely observed a single great revolution, it cannot be otherwise They completely fail to understand what a "self acting armed organization of the population" is To the question, whence arose the need for special bodies of armed men, standing above society and becoming alienated from it (police and standing army), the West European and Russian philistines are inclined to answer with a few phrases borrowed from Spencer* or Mikhailovsky,** by referring to the complexity of social life, the differentiation of functions, and so forth

Such a reference seems "scientific", it effectively dulls the senses of the man in the street and obscures the most important and basic fact, namely, the cleavage of society into irreconcilably antagonistic classes

Had this cleavage not existed, the "*self acting armed* organization of the population" might have differed from the primitive organization of a tribe of monkeys grasping sticks, or of primitive man, or of men united in a tribal form of society, by its complexity, its high technique, and so forth, but it would still have been possible

It is impossible now, because civilized society is divided into antagonistic and, indeed, irreconcilably antagonistic classes, the "self acting" arming of which would lead to an armed struggle between them A state arises, a special force is created in the form of special *bodies of armed men*,

* *Herbert Spencer* (1820 1903)—English bourgeois sociologist According to the Spencerian theory the state *originated not as a result of the appearance* of classes and the class struggle, but in consequence of "the complexity of social life "—*Ed*

** *N K Mikhailovsky* (1842 1904)—ideologist of Narodism (Populism), a trend in the Russian social and political movement hostile to Marxism Exponent of the so called "subjective method in sociology "—*Ed*

and every revolution, by destroying the state apparatus, demonstrates to us how the ruling class strives to restore the special bodies of armed men which serve *it*, and how the oppressed class strives to create a new organization of this kind, capable of serving not the exploiters but the exploited.

In the above argument, Engels raises theoretically the very question which every great revolution raises practically, palpably and on a mass scale of action, namely, the question of the relation between "special" bodies of armed men and the "self-acting armed organization of the population." We shall see how this is concretely illustrated by the experience of the European and Russian revolutions.

But let us return to Engels' exposition.

He points out that sometimes, in certain parts of North America, for example, this public power is weak (he has in mind a rare exception in capitalist society, and parts of North America in its pre-imperialist days where the free colonist predominated), but that in general it grows stronger:

> ... "It [the public power] grows stronger, however, in proportion as the class antagonisms within the state become more acute, and with the growth in size and population of the adjacent states. We have only to look at our present-day Europe, where class struggle and rivalry in conquest have screwed up the public power to such a pitch that it threatens to devour the whole of society and even the state itself. ..."

This was written no later than the beginning of the nineties of the last century, Engels' last preface being dated June 16, 1891. The turn towards imperialism—meaning by that the complete domination of the trusts, the omnipotence of the big banks, a colonial policy on a grand scale, and so forth—was only just beginning in France, and was even weaker in North America and in Germany. Since then "rivalry in conquest" has made gigantic strides—especially as, by the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century, the whole world had been finally divided up among these "rivals in conquest," *i.e.*, among the great predatory powers. Since then, military and naval armaments have grown to monstrous proportions, and the predatory war of 1914-17 for the domination of the world by England or Germany, for the divison of the spoils, has brought the "devouring" of all the forces of society by the rapacious state power to the verge of complete catastrophe.

As early as 1891 Engels was able to point to "rivalry in conquest" as one of the most important distinguishing features of the foreign policy of the Great Powers, but in 1914-17, when this rivalry, many times intensified, has given rise to an imperialist war, the social-chauvinist scoundrels cover up the defence of the predatory interests of "their own" bourgeoisie with phrases like "defence of the fatherland," "defence of the republic and the revolution," etc.!

3. *The State as an Instrument for the Exploitation of the Oppressed Class*

For the maintenance of a special public power standing above society, taxes and state loans are needed.

> "... Possessing the public power and the right to exact taxes, the officials—Engels writes—now exist as organs of society standing *above* society. The free, voluntary respect which was accorded to the organs of the gentile organization does not satisfy them, even if they could have it. ..."

Special laws are enacted proclaiming the sanctity and immunity of the officials. "The shabbiest police servant ... has more 'authority' than all the representatives of the tribe put together, but even the head of the military power of a civilized state may well envy a tribal chief the unfeigned and undisputed respect the latter enjoys."

Here the question of the privileged position of the officials as organs of state power is stated. The main point indicated is: what puts them *above* society? We shall see how this theoretical problem was solved in practice by the Paris Commune in 1871 and how it was slurred over in a reactionary manner by Kautsky in 1912.

> "... As the state arose out of the need to hold class antagonisms in check, but as it, at the same time, arose in the midst of the conflict of these classes, it is, as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which through the medium of the state became also the dominant class politically, and thus acquired new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class. ..."

It was not only the ancient and feudal states that were organs for the exploitation of the slaves and serfs but

> "... the contemporary representative state is an instrument of *exploitation of wage labour by capital. By way of exception*, however, periods occur when the warring classes are so nearly balanced that the state power, ostensibly appearing as a mediator, acquires, for the moment, a certain independence in relation to both. ..."

Such, for instance, were the absolute monarchies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Bonapartism of the First and Second Empires in France, and the Bismarck regime in Germany.

Such, we add, is the present Kerensky government in republican Russia since it began to persecute the revolutionary proletariat, at a moment when, thanks to the leadership of the petty-bourgeois democrats, the Soviets have *already* become impotent while the bourgeoisie is *not yet* strong enough openly to disperse them.

In a democratic republic, Engels continues, "wealth wields its power indirectly, but all the more effectively," first, by means of the "direct

corruption of the officials" (America); second by means of "the alliance between the government and the Stock Exchange" (France and America).

At the present time, imperialism and the domination of the banks have "developed" both these methods of defending and asserting the omnipotence of wealth in democratic republics of all descriptions to an unusually fine art. For instance, in the very first months of the Russian democratic republic, one might say during the honeymoon of the union of the "Socialist" S.-R.'s [Socialist-Revolutionaries] and the Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie, Mr. Palchinsky, in the coalition government, obstructed every measure intended to restrain the capitalists and their marauding practices, their plundering of the public treasury on war contracts. When later on Mr. Palchinsky resigned (and, of course, was replaced by just such another Palchinsky), the capitalists "rewarded" him with a "soft" job and a salary of 120,000 rubles per annum. What would you call this—direct or indirect corruption? An alliance between the government and the syndicates, or "only" friendly relations? What role do the Chernovs, Tseretelis, Avksentyevs and Skobelevs play? Are they the "direct" or only the indirect allies of the millionaire treasury looters?

The omnipotence of "wealth" is thus more *secure* in a democratic republic, since it does not depend on the faulty political shell of capitalism. A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism, and, therefore, once capital has gained control of this very best shell (through the Palchinskys, Chernovs, Tseretelis and Co.), it establishes its power so securely, so firmly, that *no* change, either of persons, of institutions, or of parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic, can shake it.

We must also note that Engels very definitely calls universal suffrage an instrument of bourgeois rule. Universal suffrage, he says, obviously summing up the long experience of German Social-Democracy, is

> ". . . an index of the maturity of the working class. It cannot and never will be anything more in the modern state."

The petty-bourgeois democrats, such as our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and also their twin brothers, the social-chauvinists and opportunists of Western Europe, all expect "more" from universal suffrage. They themselves share and instil into the minds of the people the wrong idea that universal suffrage "in the *modern* state" is really capable of expressing the will of the majority of the toilers and of ensuring its realization.

Here we can only note this wrong idea, only point out that Engels' perfectly clear, precise and concrete statement is distorted at every step in the propaganda and agitation conducted by the "official" (*i.e.*, opportunist) Socialist parties. A detailed elucidation of the utter falsity of this idea, which Engels brushes aside, is given in our further account of the views of Marx and Engels on the "*modern*" state.

Engels gives a general summary of his views in the most popular of his works in the following words

> "The state, therefore, has not existed from all eternity There have been societies which managed without it, which had *no conception* of the state and state power At a certain stage of economic development, which was necessarily bound up with the cleavage of society into classes, the state became a necessity owing to *this* cleavage We are now rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of these classes has not only ceased to be a necessity, but is becoming a positive hindrance to production They will fall as inevitably as they arose at an earlier stage Along with them, the state will inevitably fall The society that organizes production anew on the basis of the free and equal association of the producers will put the whole state machine where it will then belong in the museum of antiquities, side by side with the spinning wheel and the bronze axe "

We do not often come across this passage in the propaganda and agitation literature of present day Social Democracy But even when we do come across it, it is generally quoted in the same manner as one bows before an icon, i e, it is done merely to show official respect for Engels, and no attempt is made to gauge the breadth and depth of the revolution that this relegating of "the whole state machine to the museum of antiquities" presupposes In most cases we do not even find an understanding of what Engels calls the state machine

4. *The "Withering Away" of the State and Violent Revolution*

Engels' words regarding the "withering away" of the state are so widely known, they are so often quoted, and they reveal the significance of the customary painting of Marxism to look like opportunism so clearly that we must deal with them in detail We shall quote the whole passage from which they are taken

> *"The proletariat seizes the state power and transforms the means of production in the first instance into state property* But in doing this, it puts an end to itself as the proletariat, it puts an end to all class differences and class antagonisms, it puts an end also to the state as the state Former society, moving in class antagonisms, had need of the state, that is, an organization of the exploiting class at each period for the maintenance of its external conditions of production, that is, therefore, for the forcible holding down of the exploited class in the conditions of oppression (slavery, villeinage or serfdom, wage labour) determined by the existing mode of production The state was the official representative of society

as a whole, its embodiment in a visible corporation; but it was this only in so far as it was the state of that class which itself, in its epoch, represented society as a whole; in ancient times, the state of the slave-owning citizens; in the Middle Ages, of the feudal nobility; in our epoch, of the bourgeoisie. When ultimately it becomes really representative of society as a whole, it makes itself superfluous. As soon as there is no longer any class of society to be held in subjection; as soon as, along with class domination and the struggle for individual existence based on the former anarchy of production, the collisions and excesses arising from these have also been abolished, there is nothing more to be repressed, which would make a special repressive force, a state, necessary. The first act in which the state really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole—the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—is at the same time its last independent act as a state. The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the process of production. The state is not 'abolished,' *it withers away.* It is from this standpoint that we must appraise the phrase 'free people's state'—both its justification at times for agitational purposes, and its ultimate scientific inadequacy—and also the demand of the so-called anarchists that the state should be abolished overnight" (*Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* [*Anti-Dühring*], pp. 314-15 of the English edition).

It may be said without fear of error that of this argument of Engels' which is so singularly rich in ideas, only one point has become an integral part of Socialist thought among modern Socialist parties, namely, that according to Marx the state "withers away"—as distinct from the anarchist doctrine of the "abolition" of the state. To emasculate Marxism in such a manner is to reduce it to opportunism, for such an "interpretation" only leaves the hazy conception of a slow, even, gradual change, of absence of leaps and storms, of absence of revolution. The current, widespread, mass, if one may say so, conception of the "withering away" of the state undoubtedly means the slurring over, if not the repudiation, of revolution.

Such an "interpretation" is the crudest distortion of Marxism, advantageous only to the bourgeoisie; in point of theory, it is based on a disregard for the most important circumstances and considerations pointed out, say, in the "summary" of Engels' argument we have just quoted in full.

In the first place, Engels at the very outset of his argument says that, in assuming state power, the proletariat by that "puts an end to the state

as the state " It is not "good form" to ponder over what this m nerally, *it is either ignored altogether, or it is considered to b* of "Hegelian" "weakness" on Engels' part As a matter of fact, these words briefly express the experience of one of the great p revolutions, the Paris Commune of 1871, of which we shall speak er detail in its proper place As a matter of fact, Engels speak "putting an end" to the *bourgeois* state by the proletarian re while the words about its withering away refer to the remnant *proletarian* state *af er* the Socialist revolution According to E bourgeois state does not "wither away," but is *"put an end* the proletariat in the course of the revolution What withers a the revolution is the proletarian state or semi state

Secondly, the state is a "special repressive force " Engels g splendid and extremely profound definition here with complete And from it follows that the "special repressive force" for the su of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, for the suppression of the of toilers by a handful of the rich, must be superseded by a 'sp essive force" for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the pr he dictatorship of the proletariat) This is precisely what is m putting an end to the state as the state " *This is precisely th* taking possession of the means of production in the name of nd it is obvious that *such* a substitution of one (proletarian) *pressive force" for another (bourgeois) "special repressive force'* ssibly take place in the form of "withering away "

Thirdly, in regard to the state "withering away," and the ev pressive and colourful "ceasing of itself,' Engels refers quite d definitely to the period *after* "the state has taken po the means of production in the name of society," that is, *af* cialist revolution We all know that the political form of the that time is the most complete democracy But it never enters t any of the opportunists who shamelessly distort Marxism that re speaks of *democracy* "withering away," or "ceasing of itsel ems very strange at first sight, but it is "unintelligible" only ho have not pondered over *the fact that democracy is also* a st that, consequently, democracy will also disappear when the state disa Revolution alone can "put an end" to the bourgeois state The s general, *i e , the most complete democracy*, can only "wither awa

Fourthly, after formulating his famous proposition that "th withers away," Engels at once explains concretely that this prop is directed equally against the opportunists and the anarchists In this, however, Engels puts in the forefront the conclusion deduce the proposition, the "state withers away," *which is directed aga* opportunists.

One can wager that out of every 10,000 persons who have read o about the "withering away" of the state, 9,990 do not know, or

remember, that Engels did not direct the conclusions he deduced from this proposition against the anarchists *alone*. Of the remaining ten, probably nine do not know the meaning of "free people's state" or why an attack on this watchword contains an attack on the opportunists. This is how history is written! This is how a great revolutionary doctrine is imperceptibly falsified and adapted to prevailing philistinism! The conclusion drawn against the anarchists has been repeated thousands of times, vulgarized, dinned into people's heads in the crudest fashion and has acquired the strength of a prejudice; whereas the conclusion drawn against the opportunists has been hushed up and "forgotten"!

The "free people's state" was a program demand and a popular slogan of the German Social-Democrats in the 'seventies. The only political content of this slogan is a pompous philistine description of the concept democracy. In so far as it hinted in a lawful manner at a democratic republic, Engels was prepared to "justify" its use "for a time" from an agitational point of view. But it was an opportunist slogan, for it not only expressed an embellishment of bourgeois democracy, but also a lack of understanding of the Socialist criticism of the state in general. We are in favour of a democratic republic as the best form of state for the proletariat under capitalism; but we have no right to forget that wage-slavery is the lot of the people even in the most democratic bourgeois republic. Furthermore, every state is a "special repressive force" for the suppression of the oppressed class. Consequently, *no* state is a "free" or a "people's state." Marx and Engels explained this repeatedly to their party comrades in the 'seventies.

Fifthly, this very same work of Engels', of which everyone remembers the argument about the "withering away" of the state, also contains a disquisition on the significance of violent revolution. Engels' historical analysis of its role becomes a veritable panegyric on violent revolution. This "no one remembers"; it is not good form in modern Socialist parties to talk or even think about the importance of this idea, and it plays no part whatever in their daily propaganda and agitation among the masses. And yet, it is inseparably bound up with the "withering away" of the state into one harmonious whole.

Here is Engels' argument:

> "That force, however, plays yet another role [other than that of a diabolical power] in history, a revolutionary role; that, in the words of Marx, it is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with the new; that it is the instrument by the aid of which the social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilized, political forms—of this there is not a word in Herr Dühring. It is only with sighs and groans that he admits the possibility that force will perhaps be necessary for the overthrow of the economic system of exploitation—unfortunately, because all use of force,

forsooth, demoralizes the person who uses it. And this in spite of the immense *moral* and spiritual impetus which has resulted from every victorious revolution! And this in Germany, where a violent collision—which indeed may be forced on the people—would at least have the advantage of wiping out the servility which has permeated the national consciousness as a result of the humiliation of the Thirty Years' War.* And this parson's mode of thought—lifeless, insipid and impotent—claims to impose itself on the most revolutionary party which history has known!" (*P. 193 of the third* German edition, end of Chap. IV, Part II)

How can this panegyric on violent revolution, which Engels insistently brought to the attention of the German Social-Democrats between 1878 and 1894, *i.e* , right up to the time of his death, be combined with the theory of the "withering away" of the state to form a single doctrine?

Usually the two views are combined by means of eclecticism, by an unprincipled, or sophistic, arbitrary selection (or a selection to please the powers that be) of one or another argument, and in ninety nine cases out of a hundred (if not more often), it is the idea of the "withering away" that is specially emphasized. Eclecticism is substituted for dialectics—this is the most usual, the most widespread phenomenon to be met with in present-day official Social Democratic literature on Marxism This sort of substitution is not new, of course, it is observed even in the history of classic Greek philosophy. In painting Marxism to look like opportunism, the substitution of eclecticism for dialectics is the best method of deceiving the masses, it gives an illusory satisfaction, it seems to take into account all sides of the process, all tendencies of development, all the conflicting influences, and so forth, whereas in reality it presents no consistent and revolutionary conception of the process of social development at all.

We have already said above, and shall show more fully later, that the doctrine of Marx and Engels concerning the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the bourgeois state The latter *cannot* be superseded by the proletarian state (the dictatorship of the proletariat) in the process of "withering away", as a general rule, this can happen only by means of a violent revolution The panegyric Engels sang in its honour, and which fully corresponds to Marx's repeated declarations (recall the concluding passages of *The Poverty of Philosophy* and *The Communist Manifesto*, with their proud and open declaration of the inevitability of a

* The reference here is to the Thirty Years' War (1618 48) which began in Germany as a struggle of the German feudal princes against the power of the [illegible] however, due to the fact that the majority of the European [illegible] the struggle, the war took on an international char[illegible] War led to the further political dismemberment of Germany, besides [illegible] and devastating the country to an extreme degree —*Ed*

violent revolution; recall Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program** of 1875, in which, almost thirty years later, he mercilessly castigates the opportunist character of that program)—this panegyric is by no means a mere "impulse," a mere declamation or a polemical sally. The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with *this* and precisely this view of violent revolution lies at the root of the *whole* of Marx's and Engels' doctrine. The betrayal of their doctrine by the social-chauvinist and Kautskyan trends which now predominate is brought out in striking relief by the neglect of *such* propaganda and agitation by both these trends.

The substitution of the proletarian state for the bourgeois state is impossible without a violent revolution. The abolition of the proletarian state, *i.e.*, of the state in general, is impossible except through the process of "withering away."

Marx and Engels fully and concretely enlarged on these views in studying each revolutionary situation separately, in analysing the lessons of the experience of each individual revolution. We shall now proceed to discuss this, undoubtedly the most important part of their doctrine.

CHAPTER II

THE STATE AND REVOLUTION THE EXPERIENCE OF 1848-51

1. *The Eve of the Revolution*

The first works of mature Marxism—*The Poverty of Philosophy* and *The Communist Manifesto*—appeared on the eve of the Revolution of 1848. For this reason, in addition to presenting the general principles of Marxism, they reflect to a certain degree the concrete revolutionary situation of the time. Hence, it will be more expedient, perhaps, to examine what the authors of these works said about the state immediately before they drew conclusions from the experience of the years 1848-51.

In *The Poverty of Philosophy* Marx wrote:

> "The working class in the course of its development will substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there will be no more political power properly so-called, since political power is precisely the official expression of class antagonism in civil society" (p. 182 of the German edition of 1885).

It is instructive to compare this general statement of the idea of the state disappearing after classes have been abolished with the statement

* *Gotha Program*—the program of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany adopted at the Gotha Congress in 1875.—*Ed.*

contained in *The Communist Manifesto*, written by Marx and Engels a few months later—to be exact, in November 1847

> "In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat
>
> ". . We have seen above that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy
>
> "The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state, *i e*, of the proletariat organized as the ruling class, and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible" (pp 31 and 37 of the seventh German edition of 1906)

Here we have a formulation of one of the most remarkable and most important ideas of Marxism on the subject of the state, namely, the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (as Marx and Engels began to call it after the Paris Commune), and also a very interesting definition of the state which also belongs to the category of the "forgotten words" of Marxism "*the state*," *i e*, "*the proletariat organized as the ruling class*"

This definition of the state has never been explained in the prevailing propaganda and agitation literature of the official Social Democratic parties More than that, it has been forgotten, for it is absolutely irreconcilable with reformism, and is a slap in the face of the common opportunist prejudices and philistine illusions about the "peaceful development of democracy."

The proletariat needs the state—this is repeated by all the opportunists, social chauvinists and Kautskyites, who assure us that this is what Marx taught But they "*forget*" to add that, in the first place, according to Marx, the proletariat needs only a state which is withering away, *i e*, a state so constituted that it begins to wither away *immediately, and cannot* but wither away Secondly, the toilers need a "state," *i e*, "the proletariat organized as the ruling class"

The state is a special organization of force, it is the organization of violence for the suppression of some class What class must the proletariat suppress? Naturally, only the exploiting class, *i e*, the bourgeoisie The toilers need a state only to overcome the resistance of the exploiters, and only the proletariat can direct this suppression, carry it out, for the proletariat is the only class that is consistently revolutionary the only class that can unite all the toilers and the exploited in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, in completely displacing it

The exploiting classes need political rule in order to maintain exploitation, *i e*, in the selfish interests of an insignificant minority and against

the interests of the vast majority of the people. The exploited classes need political rule in order completely to abolish all exploitation, *i.e.*, in the interests of the vast majority of the people, and against the interests of the insignificant minority consisting of the modern slave-owners—the landlords and the capitalists.

The petty-bourgeois democrats, those alleged Socialists who substituted dreams of class harmony for the class struggle, even pictured the Socialist reformation in a dreamy fashion—not in the form of the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class, but in the form of the peaceful submission of the minority to the majority which has become conscious of its aims. This petty-bourgeois utopia, which is inseparably bound up with the idea of the state being above classes, led in practice to the betrayal of the interests of the toiling classes, as was shown, for example, by the history of the French revolutions of 1848 and 1871, and by the "Socialists" joining bourgeois cabinets in England, France, Italy and other countries at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries.

Marx fought all his life against this petty-bourgeois Socialism—now resurrected in Russia by the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik Parties. He logically pursued his doctrine of the class struggle to the doctrine of political power, the doctrine of the state.

The overthrow of bourgeois rule can be accomplished only by the proletariat, as the particular class whose economic conditions of existence train it for this task and provide it with the opportunity and the power to perform it. While the bourgeoisie breaks up and disintegrates the peasantry and all the petty-bourgeois strata, it welds together, unites and organizes the proletariat. Only the proletariat—by virtue of the economic role it plays in large-scale production—is capable of acting as the leader of *all* the toiling and exploited masses, whom the bourgeoisie exploits, oppresses and crushes not less, and often more, than it does the proletarians, but who are incapable of waging an *independent* struggle for their emancipation.

The doctrine of the class struggle, as applied by Marx to the question of the state and of the Socialist revolution, leads inevitably to the recognition of the *political rule* of the proletariat, of its dictatorship, *i.e.*, of power shared with none and relying directly upon the armed force of the masses. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie can be achieved only by the proletariat becoming transformed into the *ruling class*, capable of crushing the inevitable and desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie, and of organizing *all* the toiling and exploited masses for the new economic order.

The proletariat needs state power, the centralized organization of force, the organization of violence, for the purpose of crushing the resistance of the exploiters and for the purpose of *leading* the great mass of the population—the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletarians—in the work of organizing Socialist economy.

By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat which is capable of assuming power and *of leading the*

whole people to Socialism, of directing and organizing the new order, of being the teacher, guide and leader of all the toilers and exploited in the task of building up their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie As against this, the opportunism which now predominates breeds in the ranks of the workers' party representatives of the better paid workers, who lose touch with the rank and file, "get along" fairly well under capitalism, and sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, i e, renounce their role of revolutionary leaders of the people against the bourgeoisie

Marx's theory "The state, i e, the proletariat organized as the ruling class," is inseparably bound up with *all* he taught on the revolutionary role of the proletariat in history The culmination of this role is the proletarian dictatorship, the political rule of the proletariat

But if the proletariat needs a state as a *special* form of organization of violence *against* the bourgeoisie, the following deduction automatically arises is it conceivable that such an organization can be created without first abolishing, destroying the state machine created by the bourgeoisie for *itself*? *The Communist Manifesto* leads straight to this deduction, and it is of this deduction that Marx speaks when summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848 51

2. *The Revolution Summed Up*

Marx sums up the Revolution of 1848 51, in connection with the question of the state we are concerned with, in the following passage in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*

> " But the revolution is thoroughgoing It is still in process of passing through purgatory It does its work methodically By December 2, 1851 [the day of Louis Bonaparte s *coup d'état*], it had completed one half of its preparatory work, it is now completing the other half First it perfected the parliamentary power, in order to be able to overthrow it Now that it has attained this, it perfects the *executive power*, reduces it to its purest expression, isolates it, sets it up against itself as the sole target, in order to *concentrate all its forces of destruction against it* [italics ours] And when it has done this second half of its preliminary work, Europe will leap from her seat and exultantly exclaim well grubbed, old mole!
>
> "This executive power with its monstrous bureaucratic and military organization, with its artificial state machinery embracing wide strata, with a host of officials numbering half a million, besides an army of another half million, this appalling parasitic growth, which enmeshes the body of French society like a net and chokes all its pores, sprang up in the days of the absolute monarchy, with the decay of the feudal system, which it helped to hasten " The first French Revolution developed centralization, 'but at the same time

[it developed] the extent, the attributes and the agents of governmental authority. Napoleon perfected this state machinery." The legitimatist monarchy and the July monarchy "added nothing but a greater division of labour. . . ."

"The parliamentary republic finally, in its struggle against the revolution, found itself compelled to strengthen, along with the repressive measures, the resources and centralization of governmental power. *All the revolutions perfected this machine, instead of smashing it up* [italics ours]. The parties that contended in turn for domination regarded the possession of this huge state edifice as the principal spoils of the victor" (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, pp. 98-99, fourth edition, Hamburg, 1907).

In this remarkable passage Marxism takes a tremendous step forward compared with *The Communist Manifesto*. In the latter, the question of the state is still treated in an extremely abstract manner, in the most general terms and expressions. In the above-quoted passage, the question is treated in a concrete manner, and the conclusion is most precise, definite, practical and palpable: all the revolutions which have occurred up to now have helped to perfect the state machine, whereas it must be smashed, broken.

This conclusion is the chief and fundamental thesis in the Marxian doctrine of the state. And it is precisely this fundamental thesis which has been not only completely *forgotten* by the predominant official Social-Democratic Parties, but positively *distorted* (as we shall see later) by the foremost theoretician of the Second International, K. Kautsky.

The Communist Manifesto gives a general summary of history, which compels us to regard the state as the organ of class rule and leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the proletariat cannot overthrow the bourgeoisie without first capturing political power, without attaining political supremacy, without transforming the state into the "proletariat organized as the ruling class"; it inevitably leads to the conclusion that this proletarian state will begin to wither away immediately after its victory, because the state is unnecessary and cannot exist in a society in which there are no class antagonisms. The question as to how, from the point of view of historical development, the substitution of the proletarian state for the bourgeois state is to take place is not raised.

Marx raises this question and answers it in 1852. True to his philosophy of dialectical materialism, Marx takes as his basis the experience of the great years of revolution, 1848 to 1851. Here, as everywhere, his teaching is the *summary of experience*, illuminated by a profound philosophical conception of the world and a rich knowledge of history.

The problem of the state is put concretely: how did the bourgeois state, the state machine necessary for the rule of the bourgeoisie, come into being historically? What changes did it undergo, what evolution did it

undergo in the course of the bourgeois revolutions and in the face of the independent actions of the oppressed classes? What are the tasks of the proletariat in relation to this state machine?

The centralized state power that is peculiar to bourgeois society came into being in the period of the fall of absolutism. Two institutions are most characteristic of this state machine· bureaucracy and a standing army In their works, Marx and Engels repeatedly mention the thousand threads which connect these institutions with the bourgeoisie. The experience of every worker illustrates this connection in an extremely striking and impressive manner. From its own bitter experience, the *working class learns* to recognize this connection; that is why it learns so quickly and why it *so completely assimilates the doctrine which reveals this inevitable* connection, a doctrine which the petty bourgeois democrats either ignorantly *and light-heartedly* deny, or, *still* more *light-heartedly*, admit "in general," forgetting to draw the corresponding practical conclusions.

The bureaucracy and the standing army are a "parasite" on the body of bourgeois society—a parasite created by the inherent antagonisms which rend that society, but a parasite which "chokes all its pores" of life The Kautskyan opportunism now prevalent in official Social-Democracy considers the view that the state is a *parasitic growth* to be the peculiar and exclusive attribute of anarchism. Naturally, this distortion of Marxism is extremely useful to those philistines who have so utterly disgraced Socialism by justifying and embellishing the imperialist war with the term "defence of the fatherland", but it is an absolute distortion nevertheless

The development, perfection and strengthening of the bureaucratic and military apparatus proceeded during all the numerous bourgeois revolutions which Europe has witnessed since the fall of feudalism It is precisely the petty bourgeoisie that is attracted to the side of the big bourgeoisie and is subordinated to it to a large extent by means of this apparatus, which provides the upper strata of the peasantry, small artisans, tradesmen and the like with comparatively comfortable, quiet and respectable jobs which raise their holders *above* the people Consider what happened in Russia during the six months following February 27, 1917. The governmental posts which hitherto had been given by preference to members of the Black Hundreds now became the spoils of the Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Nobody really thought of *introducing* any serious reforms, every effort was made to put them off "until the Constituent Assembly was convened", and to steadily put off the *convocation of* the Constituent Assembly until the end of the war! But there was no delay, no waiting for the Constituent Assembly in the matter of dividing *the spoils*, of getting the posts of ministers, vice ministers, governors general, etc , etc.! The game of combinations that was played *in forming the government* was, *in essence*, only an expression of this division and re division of the "spoils," which was going on high and low, throughout the *country*, in every department of central and local govern-

ment. The six months between February 27 and August 27, 1917, can be summed up, objectively summed up beyond all dispute, as follows: reforms shelved, distribution of official posts accomplished and "mistakes" in the distribution corrected by a few re-distributions.

But the more the bureaucratic apparatus is "re-distributed" among the various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties (among the Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, if we take the case of Russia), the more clearly the oppressed classes, with the proletariat at their head, become conscious of their irreconcilable hostility to the *whole* of bourgeois society. That is why it is necessary for all bourgeois parties, even for the most democratic and "revolutionary-democratic" parties, to increase their repressive measures against the revolutionary proletariat, to strengthen the apparatus of repression, *i.e.*, the state machine that we are discussing. This course of events compels the revolution *"to concentrate all its forces of destruction"* against the state power, and to regard the problem, not as one of perfecting the state machine, but one of *smashing and destroying it*.

It was not logical reasoning, but the actual development of events, the living experience of 1848-51, that led to the problem being presented in this way. The extent to which Marx held strictly to the solid ground of historical experience can be seen from the fact that, in 1852, he did not yet deal concretely with the question of *what* was to take the place of the state machine that was to be destroyed. Experience had not yet provided material for the solution of this problem which history placed on the order of the day later on, in 1871. In 1852 it was only possible to establish with the accuracy of scientific observation that the proletarian revolution *had approached* the task of "concentrating all its forces of destruction" against the state, of "breaking" the state machine.

Here the question may arise: is it correct to generalize the experience, observations and conclusions of Marx, to apply them to a field that is wider than the history of France during the three years 1848-51? Before proceeding to answer this question we shall recall a remark made by Engels, and then we shall proceed to examine the facts. In his introduction to the third edition of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* Engels wrote:

> "France is the land, where, more than anywhere else, the historical class struggles were each time fought out to a decision, and where, consequently, the changing political forms within which they occur and in which their results are summarized have likewise been stamped with the sharpest outlines. The centre of feudalism in the Middle Ages, the model country of centralized monarchy resting on estates since the Renaissance, France has demolished feudalism in the Great Revolution and established the unalloyed rule of the bourgeoisie in a classical purity unequalled by any other European land. And the struggle of the upward striving proletariat against the ruling bourgeoisie also appeared here in an acute form unknown elsewhere" (p. 4 of the 1907 edition).

The last sentence is out of date, inasmuch as a lull has occurred in the revolutionary struggle of the French proletariat since 1871, although, long as this lull may be, it does not preclude the possibility that, in the coming proletarian revolution, France may once again reveal itself as the classic land of the class struggle to a finish

Let us, however, cast a general glance over the history of the advanced countries at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries We shall see that the same process has been going on more slowly, in more varied forms, on a much wider field on the one hand, the development of "parliamentary power" in the republican countries (France, America, Switzerland), as well as in the monarchies (England, Germany to a certain extent, Italy, the Scandinavian countries, etc), on the other hand, a struggle for power between the various bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties which distribute and re distribute the "spoils" of office, while the foundations of bourgeois society remain unchanged Finally, the perfection and consolidation of the "executive power," its bureaucratic and military apparatus.

There is not the slightest doubt that these features are common to the whole of the modern evolution of all capitalist states in general In the three years 1848 51 France displayed, in a swift, sharp, concentrated form, all the processes of development which are peculiar to the whole capitalist world

Imperialism—the era of bank capital, the era of gigantic capitalist monopolies, the era of the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly capitalism—has particularly witnessed an unprecedented strengthening of the "state machine" and an unpecedented growth of its bureaucratic and military apparatus, in connection with the increase in repressive measures against the proletariat in the monarchical as well as in the freest republican countries

World history is now undoubtedly leading to the "concentration of all the forces" of the proletarian revolution on the "destruction" of the state machine on an incomparably larger scale than in 1852

What the proletariat will put in its place is indicated by the extremely instructive material provided by the Paris Commune

*3. The Presentation of the Question by Marx in 1852**

In 1907, Mehring, in the magazine *Neue Zeit* (Vol XXV, 2, p 164), published extracts from a letter from Marx to Weydemeyer dated March 5, 1852 This letter, among other things, contains the following remarkable observation

> "And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between

* This section was added by Lenin in the second Russian edition of *The State and Revolution*, 1919 —*Ed*

them. Long before me, bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle, and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular, historic phases in the development of production* [*historische Entwicklungsphasen der Produktion*]; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to *a classless society*."*

In these words Marx succeeded in expressing with striking clarity, first, the chief and radical difference between his doctrine and that of the foremost and most profound thinkers of the bourgeoisie; and, second, the essence of his doctrine of the state.

It is often said and written that the core of Marx's theory is the class struggle; but this is not true. And from this error very often springs the opportunist distortion of Marxism, its falsification to make it acceptable to the bourgeoisie. For the doctrine of the class struggle was created *not* by Marx, but by the bourgeoisie *before* Marx, and generally speaking it is *acceptable* to the bourgeoisie. Those who recognize *only* the class struggle are not yet Marxists; they may be found to be still within the boundaries of bourgeois reasoning and bourgeois politics. To limit Marxism to the doctrine of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is where the profound difference lies between a Marxist and an ordinary petty (and even big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and acceptance of Marxism should be tested. And it is not surprising that when the history of Europe brought the working class face to face with this question in a *practical* way, not only all the opportunists and reformists, but all the Kautskyites (people who vacillate between reformism and Marxism) proved to be miserable philistines and petty-bourgeois democrats who *repudiated* the dictatorship of the proletariat. Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, published in August 1918, *i.e.*, long after the first edition of the present pamphlet, is an example of petty-bourgeois distortion of Marxism and base renunciation of it *in practice*, while hypocritically recognizing it *in words* (see my pamphlet, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Petrograd and Moscow, 1918).

Present-day opportunism in the person of its principal representative, the ex-Marxist, K. Kautsky, fits in completely with Marx's characterization of the *bourgeois* position quoted above, for this opportunism limits the field of recognition of the class struggle to the realm of bourgeois relation-

* *The Correspondence of Marx and Engels.—Ed.*

ships (Within this realm, within its framework, not a single educated liberal will refuse to recognize the class struggle 'in principle"!) Opportunism *does not carry* the recognition of class struggle to the *main point* to the period of *transition* from capitalism to Communism, to the period of the *overthrow* and complete abolition of the bourgeoisie In reality, this period inevitably becomes a period of an unprecedentedly violent class struggle in unprecedentedly acute forms and, consequently, during this period the state must inevitably be a state that is democratic *in a new way* (for the proletariat and the propertyless in general) and dictatorial *in a new way* (against the bourgeoisie)

To proceed The essence of Marx's doctrine of the state is assimilated only by those who understand that the dictatorship of a *single* class is necessary not only for class society in general, not only for the *proletariat* which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but for the entire *historical period* which separates capitalism from "classless society," from Communism The forms of bourgeois states are extremely varied, but in essence they are all the same in one way or another, in the final analysis, all these states are inevitably the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie* The transition from capitalism to Communism will certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms, but their essence will inevitably be the same *the dictatorship of the proletariat*

CHAPTER III

THE STATE AND REVOLUTION EXPERIENCE OF THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871 MARX'S ANALYSIS

1 *Wherein Lay the Heroism of the Communard's Attempt?*

It is well known that in the autumn of 1870, a few months before the Commune, Marx warned the Paris workers that any attempt to overthrow the government would be the folly of despair But when, in March 1871, a decisive battle was *forced* upon the workers and they accepted it, when the uprising had become a fact, Marx greeted the proletarian revolution with the greatest enthusiasm, in spite of unfavourable auguries Marx did not assume the rigid attitude of pedantically condemning an 'untimely" movement as did the ill famed Russian renegade from Marxism, Plekhanov, who, in November 1905, wrote encouragingly about the workers' and peasants' struggle, but, after December 1905, cried, liberal fashion "They should not have taken to arms "

Marx, however, was not only enthusiastic about the heroism of the Communards who "stormed Heaven," as he expressed it Although it did not achieve its aim, he regarded the mass revolutionary movement as a

historic experiment of momentous importance, as an advance of the world proletarian revolution, as a practical step that was more important than hundreds of programs and discussions. Marx conceived his task to be to analyse this experiment, to draw lessons in tactics from it, to re-examine his theory in the new light it afforded.

The only "correction" Marx thought it necessary to make in *The Communist Manifesto*, he made on the basis of the revolutionary experience of the Paris Communards.

The last preface to the new German edition of *The Communist Manifesto*, signed by both its authors, is dated June 24, 1872. In this preface the authors, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, say that the program of *The Communist Manifesto* "has in some details become antiquated" now, and they go on to say:

> *"One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes.'"*

The authors took the words in single quotation marks in this passage from Marx's book, *The Civil War in France*.

Thus, Marx and Engels regarded one of the principal and fundamental lessons of the Paris Commune as being of such momentous importance that they introduced it as a vital correction into *The Communist Manifesto*.

It is extremely characteristic that it is precisely this vital correction that has been distorted by the opportunists, and its meaning, probably is not known to nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths, of the readers of *The Communist Manifesto*. We shall deal with this distortion more fully further on, in a chapter devoted specially to distortions. Here it will be sufficient to note that the current vulgar "interpretation" of Marx's famous utterance just quoted is that Marx here emphasizes the idea of gradual development in contradistinction to the seizure of power, and so on.

As a matter of fact, *exactly the opposite is the case*. Marx's idea is that the working class must *break up, smash* the "ready-made state machinery," and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it.

On April 12, 1871, *i.e.*, just at the time of the Commune, Marx wrote to Kugelmann:

> "If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it [Marx's italics—the original is *zerbrechen*], and that is a preliminary condition for every real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting." (*Neue Zeit*, Vol. XX, 1, 1901-02, p. 709. The letters of Marx to Kugelmann have

come out in Russian in no less than two editions, one of them edited and with an introduction by me *)

The words, "to smash the bureaucratic military state machine," briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism on the tasks of the proletariat in relation to the state during a revolution And it is precisely this lesson that has been not only completely forgotten, but positively distorted, in the prevailing Kautskyan "interpretation" of Marxism

As for Marx's reference to *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, we quoted the corresponding passage in full above

It is interesting to note two particular points in the above quoted passage in Marx's argument *First, he confines his conclusions to the Continent* This was natural in 1871, when England was still *the model of a purely capitalist country*, but without militarism and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy Hence, Marx excluded England, where a revolution, even a people's revolution, could be conceived of, and was then possible, *without* the condition of first destroying the "ready made state machinery"

Today, in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, this qualification made by Marx is no longer valid Both England and America, the greatest and last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo Saxon "liberty," in the sense that militarism and bureaucracy were absent, have today plunged headlong into the all European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic military institutions to which everything is subordinated and which trample everything under foot Today, in England and in America, too, the preliminary condition for "every real people's revolution" is the *smashing*, the *destruction* of the "ready made state machinery" (brought in those countries, between 1914 and 1917, to "European," general imperialist perfection)

Secondly, particular attention should be paid to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine is "a preliminary condition for every real *people's* revolution" This idea of a "people's" revolution seems strange coming from Marx and the Russian Plekhanovites and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression to be a "slip of the pen" They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretched "liberal" distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revo*lution*—and even this antithesis they interpret in an entirely lifeless way

If, for example, we take the revolutions of the twentieth century, we shall, of course, have to admit that the Portuguese and the Turkish revolutions are both bourgeois revolutions Neither, however, is a "people's" revolution, inasmuch as in neither of them does the mass of the people,

* See Lenin *Selected Works*, Vol XI Eng ed p 712 —*Ed*

the enormous majority, come out actively, independently, with its own economic and political demands to any noticeable degree. On the other hand, although the Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905-07 presented no such "brilliant" successes as at times fell to the lot of the Portuguese and Turkish revolutions, it was undoubtedly a "real people's" revolution, since the mass of the people, the majority, the "lowest social ranks," crushed by oppression and exploitation, rose independently and put on the entire course of the revolution the impress of *their* demands, of *their* attempts to build in their own way a new society in place of the old society that was being destroyed.

In Europe, in 1871, there was not a single country on the Continent in which the proletariat constituted the majority of the people. A "people's" revolution, one that actually swept the majority into its stream, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasantry. These two classes then constituted the "people." These two classes were united by the fact that the "bureaucratic-military state machine" oppressed, crushed, exploited them. To *smash* this machine, to *break it up*—this is what is truly in the interests of the "people," of the majority, of the workers and most of the peasants, this is what is "the preliminary condition" for a free alliance between the poor peasants and the proletarians; without such an alliance democracy is unstable and Socialist transformation is impossible.

As is well known, the Paris Commune strove for such an alliance, although it failed to achieve it owing to a number of circumstances, internal and external.

Consequently, in speaking of a "real people's revolution," Marx, without in the least forgetting the peculiar characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie (he spoke a great deal about them and often), took strict account of the class relations that actually existed in the majority of continental countries in Europe in 1871. On the other hand, he asserted that the "smashing" of the state machine was necessary in the interests of the workers and of the peasants, that it unites them, that it places before them the common task of removing the "parasite" and of superseding it by something new.

By what exactly?

2. *What Is to Supersede the Smashed State Machine?*

In 1847, in *The Communist Manifesto,* Marx's answer to this question was still a purely abstract one, or, to speak more correctly, it was an answer that indicated the problem, but did not solve it. The answer given in *The Communist Manifesto* was that "the proletariat organized as the ruling class," the "winning of the battle of democracy" was to supersede this machine.

Marx did not drop into utopia, he expected the *experience* of the mass movement to provide the reply to the question of the exact forms the organization of the proletariat as the ruling class will assume and the exact manner in which this organization will be combined with the most complete, most consistent "winning of the battle of democracy"

Marx subjected the experience of the Commune, meagre as it was, to the most careful analysis in *The Civil War in France* Let us quote the most important passages of this work

> Originating from the days of the Middle Ages, there developed in the nineteenth century "the centralized state power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy and judicature" With the development of class antagonisms between capital and labour, " the state power assumed more and more the character of the national power of capital over labour, of a public force organized for social enslavement, of an engine of class despotism After every revolution marking a progressive phase in the class struggle, the purely repressive character of the state power stands out in bolder and bolder relief" After the Revolution of 1848 49, the state power became "the national war engine of capital against labour" The Second Empire* consolidated this
>
> "The direct antithesis to the Empire was the Commune It was the "positive form" of "a republic that was not only" to supersede the monarchical form of class rule, but class rule itself"

What was this "positive" form of the proletarian, the Socialist republic? What was the state it was beginning to create?

> "The first decree of the Commune was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people"

This demand now figures in the program of every party calling itself Socialist But the value of their programs is best shown by the behaviour of our Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who, precisely after the revolution of February 27, refused to carry out this demand!

> "The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class Instead of continuing to be the agent of the Central Government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune So were the officials of all other branches of the administration From the members of the Commune downwards,

* *Second Empire*—i e, the empire under Napoleon III—Louis Bonaparte (1852 70) as distinct from that of Napoleon I (1804 14) —*Ed*

> the public service had to be done at *workmen's wages*. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves. . . .
>
> "Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the physical force elements of the old government, the Commune was anxious to break the spiritual force of repression, the 'parson-power'. . . .
>
> "The judicial functionaries were to be divested of [their] sham independence. . . ." they "were to be elective, responsible and revocable."

Thus the Commune appears to have substituted "only" fuller democracy for the smashed state machine: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this "only" signifies a gigantic supersession of certain institutions by other institutions of a fundamentally different order. This is a case of "quantity becoming transformed into quality": democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is in general conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois democracy into proletarian democracy; from the state (=a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer really a state.

It is still necessary to suppress the bourgeoisie and crush its resistance. This was particularly necessary for the Commune; and one of the reasons for its defeat was that it did not do this with sufficient determination. But the organ of suppression is now the majority of the population, and not a minority, as was always the case under slavery, serfdom and wage-slavery. And since the majority of the people *itself* suppresses its oppressors, a "special force" for suppression is *no longer necessary*! In this sense the state *begins to wither away*. Instead of the special institutions of a privileged minority (privileged officialdom, the command of the standing army), the majority itself can directly fulfill all these functions, and the more the functions of state power devolve upon the people generally the less need is there for the existence of this power.

In this connection the measures of the Commune emphasized by Marx are particularly noteworthy, *viz.*, the abolition of all representation allowances, and of all monetary privileges in the case of officials, the reduction of the remuneration of *all* servants of the state to the level of "*workmen's wages*." This shows more clearly than anything else the *turn* from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, from the democracy of the oppressors to the democracy of the oppressed classes, from the state as a "*special force*" for the suppression of a definite class to the suppression of the oppressors by the *general force* of the majority of the people—the workers and the peasants. And it is precisely on this most striking point, perhaps the most important as far as the problem of the state is concerned, that the teachings of Marx have been most completely forgotten! In popular com-

mentaries, the number of which is legion, this is *not mentioned* It is "good form" to keep silent about it as if it were a piece of old fashioned "naivete," just as the Christians, after Christianity had attained the status of a state religion, "forgot" the "naivete" of primitive Christianity with its democratic revolutionary spirit.

The reduction of the *remuneration of the highest state officials* seems to be "simply" a demand of naive, primitive democracy One of the "founders" of modern opportunism, the ex Social Democrat, Eduard Bernstein, has more than once exercised his talents in repeating the vulgar bourgeois jeers at "primitive" democracy Like all opportunists, and like the present Kautskyans, he *utterly failed to understand that, first of all, the transition* from capitalism to Socialism is *impossible* without some "reversion" to "primitive" democracy (for how else can the majority, and even the whole population proceed to discharge state functions?), and, secondly, he forgets that "primitive democracy" based on capitalism and capitalist culture is not the same as primitive democracy *in pre historic* or *pre capitalist* times Capitalist culture has *created* large scale production, factories, railways, the postal service, telephones, etc , and *on this basis* the great majority of the functions of the old "state power" have become so simplified and can be reduced to such simple operations of registration, filing and checking that they can be easily performed by every literate person, can quite easily be performed for ordinary "workmen's wages," and can (and must) be stripped of every shadow of privilege, of every semblance of "official grandeur "

All officials, without exception elected and subject to recall *at any time*, their salaries reduced to the level of ordinary "workmen's wages"—these simple and "self evident" democratic measures, while completely uniting the interests of the workers and the majority of the peasants at the same time serve as a bridge between *capitalism and Socialism* These measures concern the purely political reconstruction of society, but, of course they acquire their full meaning and significance only in connection with the "expropriation of the expropriators" either being accomplished or in preparation *i e* with the transformation of capitalist private ownership *of the means of production* into social ownership

> "The Commune," Marx wrote, "made that catchword of bourgeois revolutions, cheap government, a reality by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure—the standing army and state functionarism "

From the peasantry, as from other sections of the petty bourgeoisie, only an insignificant few "rise to the top," "get on in the world" in the bourgeois sense, *i e* , become either well to do people, bourgeois, or officials in secure and privileged positions In every capitalist country where there is a peasantry (as there *is in most capitalist countries*), *the vast* majority of the peasants are oppressed by the government and *long for*

its overthrow, long for "cheap" government. This can be achieved *only* by the proletariat; and by achieving it, the proletariat at the same time takes a step towards the Socialist reconstruction of the state.

3. *Abolition of Parliamentarism*

> "The Commune," Marx wrote, "was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time. . . ."
> "Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and repress (*ver-und zertreten*) the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business."

Thanks to the prevalence of social-chauvinism and opportunism, this remarkable criticism of parliamentarism made in 1871 also belongs now to the "forgotten words" of Marxism. The Cabinet Ministers and professional parliamentarians, the traitors to the proletariat and the "practical" Socialists of our day, have left all criticism of parliamentarism to the anarchists, and, on this wonderfully intelligent ground, they denounce *all* criticism of parliamentarism as "anarchism"!! It is not surprising that the proletariat of the "advanced" parliamentary countries, disgusted with such "Socialists" as Messrs. Scheidemanns, Davids, Legiens, Sembats, Renaudels, Hendersons, Vanderveldes, Staunings, Brantings, Bissolatis and Co., has been more and more giving its sympathies to anarcho-syndicalism, in spite of the fact that the latter is but the twin brother of opportunism.

But for Marx revolutionary dialectics was never the empty fashionable phrase, the toy rattle, which Plekhanov, Kautsky and the others have made of it. Marx knew how to break with anarchism ruthlessly for its inability to make use even of the "pig-sty" of bourgeois parliamentarism, especially when the situation is obviously not revolutionary; but at the same time he knew how to subject parliamentarism to genuine revolutionary-proletarian criticism.

To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and oppress the people in parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.

But if it is the state we are to examine, and if parliamentarism is to be regarded as one of the institutions of the state from the point of view of the tasks of the proletariat in *this* field, what is the way out of parliamentarism? How can it be dispensed with?

Once again we must repeat: the lessons of Marx, based on the study of the Commune, have been so completely forgotten that any criticism of

parliamentarism, other than anarchist or reactionary criticism, is quite unintelligible to the present-day "Social Democrat" (read present day traitor to Socialism)

The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of the representative institutions and the electoral principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from mere "talking shops" into working bodies. "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time "

"A working, not a parliamentary body"—this hits straight from the shoulder at the present-day parliamentarians and parliamentary "lap-dogs" of Social Democracy! Take any parliamentary country, from America to Switzerland, from France to England, Norway and so forth—in these countries the actual work of the "state" is done behind the scenes and is carried on by the departments, chancelleries and General Staffs Parliament itself is given up to talk for the special purpose of fooling the "common people " This is so true that even in the Russian republic, a bourgeois democratic republic, all these sins of parliamentarism were immediately revealed, even before a real parliament was created The heroes of rotten philistinism, such as the Skobelevs and Tseretelis, the Chernovs and Avksentyevs, have managed to pollute even the Soviets with the most disgusting bourgeois parliamentarism and to convert them into mere talking shops In the Soviets, the Right Honourable "Socialist" Ministers are fooling the credulous rustics with phrasemongering and resolutions In the government itself a sort of permanent quadrille is going on in order that, on the one hand, as many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as possible may in turn get near the "pie," the lucrative and honourable posts, and that, on the other hand, the "attention of the people" may be engaged Meanwhile, the real "state" business is being done in the chancelleries and General Staffs

Dyelo Naroda, the organ of the ruling "Socialist Revolutionary" Party, recently admitted in an editorial article—with the matchless can dour of people of "good society," in which "all" are engaged in political prostitution—that even in those Ministries of which the "Socialists" (save the mark) are at the head, the whole bureaucratic apparatus has *in* fact remained as of old, is working in the old way and "freely" sabotaging revolutionary measures Even without this admission, would not the actual history of the participation of the *Socialist Revolutionaries* and *Menshe viks* in the government prove this? The only characteristic thing in this is that, in the Ministerial company of the Cadets, Messrs Chernovs, Rus sanovs, Zenzinovs *and the other editors of Dyelo Naroda* have so completely lost all sense of shame as to unblushingly proclaim, as if it were a mere bagatelle, that in "their" Ministries everything has remained as of old!! Revolutionary *democratic* phrases to gull the rural Simple Simons, bureaucracy and red tape for the "benefit" of the capitalists—that is the *essence* of the "honest" coalition

The Commune was to have substituted for the venal and rotten parliamentarism of bourgeois society institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion would not have degenerated into deception, for the parliamentarians would have had to work themselves, would have had to execute their own laws, themselves to test their results in real life, and would have been directly responsible to their constituents. Representative institutions would have remained, but there was to have been *no* parliamentarism as a special system, as the division of labour between the legislative and the executive, as a privileged position for the deputies. We cannot imagine democracy, not even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions, but we can and *must* imagine democracy without parliamentarism, if criticism of bourgeois society is not mere empty words for us, if the desire to overthow the rule of the bourgeoisie is our earnest and sincere desire, and not a mere "election" cry for catching workers' votes, as it is with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Scheidemanns, Legiens, Sembats and Vanderveldes.

It is extremely instructive to note that, in speaking of the functions of the officials *who* are necessary for the Commune and for the proletarian democracy, Marx compares them to the workers of "every other employer," that is, of the ordinary capitalist enterprise, with its "workers, foremen and clerks."

There is no trace of utopianism in Marx, in the sense that he invented or imagined a "new" society. No, he studied the *birth* of the new society *from* the old, the forms of transition from the latter to the former as a natural-historical process. He examined the actual experience of a mass proletarian movement and tried to draw practical lessons from it. He "learned" from the Commune, just as all the great revolutionary thinkers were not afraid to learn from the experience of the great movements of the oppressed classes, and never preached them pedantic "sermons" (such as Plekhanov's: "they should not have taken to arms"; or Tsereteli's: "a class must limit itself").

There can be no thought of destroying bureaucracy immediately, everywhere and completely. That is utopia. But to *smash* the old bureaucratic machine at once and to begin immediately to construct a new one that will enable all bureaucracy to be gradually abolished is *not* utopia, it is borne out by the experience of the Commune, it is the direct and immediate task of the revolutionary proletariat.

Capitalism simplifies the functions of "state" administration; it makes it possible to throw "official grandeur" aside and to reduce the whole business to a matter of organizing the proletarians (as the ruling class), which will hire "workers, foremen and clerks" in the name of the whole of society.

We are not utopians, we do not indulge in "dreams" of dispensing *at once* with all administration, with all subordination; these anarchist dreams, based upon a lack of understanding of the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship, are totally alien to Marxism, and, as a matter of fact, serve

only to postpone the Socialist revolution until human nature has changed No, we want the Socialist revolution with human nature *as it is* now, with human nature that cannot dispen e with subordination control and "foremen and clerks"

But the subordination must be to the armed vanguard of all the exploited, of all the toilers, *i e*, to the proletariat *Measures can and must be taken* at once, overnight, to substitute for the specific "official grandeur" of state officials the simple functions of "workmen and managers," functions which are already fully within the capacity of the average city dweller and can well be performed for "workmen's wages"

We ourselves, the workers, will organize large scale production on the basis of what capitalism has already created, relying on our own experience as workers, establishing strict, iron discipline supported by the state power of the armed workers, we shall reduce the role of the state officials to that of simply carrying out our instructions as responsible, revocable, modestly paid "managers" (of course, with the aid of technicians of all sorts, types and degrees) This is *our* proletarian task, this is what we can and must *start* with in carrying out the proletarian revolution Such a beginning, on the basis of large scale production, will of itself lead to the gradual "withering away" of all bureaucracy, to the gradual creation of an order, an order without quotation marks, which will be different from wage slavery, an order in which the functions of control and accounting—becoming more and more simple—will be performed by each in turn, will then become a habit and will finally die out as the *special* functions of a special section of the population

A witty German Social Democrat of the seventies of the last century called the *post office* an example of the Socialist system This is very true At present the post office is a business organized on the lines of a state *capitalist monopoly Imperialism is gradually transforming* all trusts into organizations of a similar type, in which, over the "common" toilers, who are overworked and starved, *there stands the same bourgeois bureaucracy* But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand Overthrow the capitalists, crush *the resistance of these exploiters* with the iron hand of the armed workers, smash the bureaucratic machine of the modern state—and you will have a mechanism of the highest technical equipment, free from the "parasite," capable of being wielded by the united workers themselves, who will hire their own *technicians, managers* and bookkeepers, and pay them *all*, as, indeed *all* "state" officials in general, ordinary workmen's wages Here is a concrete, practical task, immediately possible of fulfilment in relation to all trusts, a task that will free the toilers from exploitation *and take into account what* the Commune had already begun to practise (particularly in the field of state construction)

Our immediate object is to organize the *whole* national economy on the lines of the postal system, so that the technicians, *managers, bookkeep*

ers, as well as *all* officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "workmen's wages," all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat. It is such a state, standing on such an economic basis, that we need. This is what will bring about the abolition of parliamentarism and the preservation of representative institutions. This is what will rid the labouring classes of the prostitution of these institutions by the bourgeoisie.

4. *Organization of National Unity*

"... In a rough sketch of national organization which the Commune had no time to develop, it states clearly that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest country hamlet. . . ." The Communes were to elect the "National Delegation" in Paris.

"... The few but important functions which still would remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been intentionally misstated, but were to be discharged by Communal and therefore strictly responsible agents.... The unity of the nation was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, to be organized by the Communal Constitution, and to become a reality by the destruction of the state power which claimed to be the embodiment of that unity independent of, and superior to, the nation itself, from which it was but a parasitic excrescence. While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority usurping pre-eminence over society itself, and restored to the responsible agents of society."

To what extent the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy have failed to understand—or perhaps it would be more true to say, did not want to understand—these observations of Marx is best shown by the book of Herostratean fame of the renegade Bernstein, *The Premises of Socialism and the Tasks of Social-Democracy*. It is precisely in connection with the above passage from Marx that Bernstein wrote that this program "... in its political content, in all its essential features, displays the greatest similarity to the federalism of Proudhon. . . . In spite of all the other points of difference between Marx and the 'petty-bourgeois' Proudhon [Bernstein places the word "petty-bourgeois" in quotation marks in order to make it sound ironical], on these points their ways of thinking resemble each other as closely as could be." Of course, Bernstein continues, the importance of the municipalities is growing, but "it seems doubtful to me whether the first task of democracy would be such a dissolution [*Auflosung*] of the modern states and such a complete transformation [*Umwandlung*] of their organization as is visualized by Marx and Proudhon (the formation of a National Assembly from delegates of the provincial or district assemblies, which, in their turn, would consist of delegates

from the Communes, so that the whole previous mode of national representation would vanish completely." (Bernstein, *Premises*, pp 134 and 136 of the German edition of 1899).

To confuse Marx's views on the "destruction of the state power—of the parasitic excrescence" with Proudhon's federalism is positively monstrous! But it is not an accident, for it never occurs to the opportunist that Marx does not speak here about federalism as opposed to centralism, but about smashing the old, bourgeois state machine which exists in all bourgeois countries.

The only thing that penetrates the opportunist's mind is what he sees around him, in a society of petty bourgeois philistinism and "reformist" stagnation, namely, only "municipalities!" *The opportunist has even forgotten how to think about proletarian revolution.*

It is ridiculous! But the remarkable thing is that nobody disputed Bernstein on this point Bernstein has been refuted by many, especially by Plekhanov in Russian literature and by Kautsky in European literature, but *neither of them said anything about this distortion of Marx by Bernstein*

To such an extent has the opportunist forgotten to think in a revolutionary way and to ponder over revolution that he attributes "federalism" to Marx and confuses him with the founder of anarchism, Proudhon And Kautsky and Plekhanov, those would be orthodox Marxists and defenders of the doctrine of revolutionary Marxism, are *silent on this point!* Herein lies one of the roots of the extreme vulgarization of the views concerning the difference between Marxism and anarchism which is characteristic of the Kautskyans and of the opportunists, and which we shall discuss later

Marx's observations on the experience of the Commune just quoted contain not a trace of federalism Marx agreed with Proudhon on the very point that the opportunist Bernstein failed to see Marx disagreed with Proudhon on the very point on which Bernstein said there was agreement.

Marx agreed with Proudhon on the necessity of *"smashing" the present state machine* Neither the opportunists nor the Kautskyans wish to see this similarity between Marxism and anarchism (both Proudhon and Bakunin) because on this point they have departed from Marxism.

Marx differed both with Proudhon and with Bakunin precisely on the question of federalism (not to *mention the dictatorship of the proletariat*). Federalism as a principle follows logically from the petty-bourgeois views of anarchism. Marx was a centralist. There is no departure from centralism in his observations just quoted. Only those who are imbued with the petty-bourgeois "superstitious belief" in the state can mistake *the abolition of the bourgeois* state machine for the abolition of centralism!

But will it not be centralism if the proletariat and poor peasantry take political power into their own hands, organize themselves freely in com-

munes, and *unite* the action of all the communes in striking at capital, in crushing the resistance of the capitalists, and in transferring the ownership of the railways, factories, land and so forth to the *entire* nation, to the whole of society? Will that not be the most consistent democratic centralism? And proletarian centralism at that?

Bernstein simply cannot conceive the possibility of voluntary centralism, of the voluntary amalgamation of the communes into a nation, the voluntary fusion of the proletarian communes for the purpose of destroying bourgeois rule and the bourgeois state machine. Like all philistines, Bernstein can imagine centralism only as something from above, to be imposed and maintained solely by the bureaucracy and the military.

Marx, as though foreseeing the possibilty of his ideas being distorted, deliberately emphasized the fact that the charge that the Commune desired to destroy the unity of the nation, to abolish the central power, was an intentional misstatement. Marx deliberately used the words: "The unity of the nation was . . . to be organized," so as to contrast conscious, democratic proletarian centralism to bourgeois, military, bureaucratic centralism.

But ... there are none so deaf as those who will not hear. And the very thing the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy do not want to hear about is the destruction of the state power, the amputation of the parasitic excrescence.

5. *Abolition of the Parasite State*

We have already quoted Marx's utterances on this subject, and we must now supplement them.

> "It is generally the fate of completely new historical creations," he wrote, "to be mistaken for the counter-part of older and even defunct forms of social life, to which they may bear a certain likeness. Thus, this new Commune, which breaks the modern state power, has been mistaken for a reproduction of the mediaeval Communes . . . for . . . a federation of small states, as dreamt of by Montesquieu and the Girondins . . . for an exaggerated form of the ancient struggle against over-centralization. . . . The Communal Constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by the state parasite feeding upon, and clogging the free movement of society. By this one act it would have initiated the regeneration of France. . . . The Communal Constitution brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and there secured to them, in the working men, the natural trustees of their interests. The very existence of the Commune involved, as a matter of course, local municipal liberty, but no longer as a check upon the now superseded state power."

"Destruction of the state power," which was a "parasitic excrescence", the "amputation" and "smashing" of "the now *superseded state power*"— these are the expressions Marx used of the state in appraising and analysing the experience of the Commune

All this was written a little less than half a century ago, and now one has to make excavations, as it were, to bring undistorted Marxism to the knowledge of the masses The conclusions drawn from the observation of the last great revolution which Marx lived *through* were *forgotten* just at the moment when the time for the next great proletarian revolutions had arrived

> "The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected, and the multiplicity of interests which construed *it in their favour, show that it* was *a thoroughly* expansive political form, while all previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive Its true secret was this It was essentially *a working class government*, the produce of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labour.
>
> "Except on this last condition, the Communal Constitution would have been an impossibility and a delusion "

The utopians busied themselves with "discovering" political forms under which the Socialist transformation of society was to take place The *anarchists* waived *the question of political forms altogether* The opportunists of present day Social Democracy accepted the bourgeois political forms of the parliamentary democratic state as the unsurpassable limit, they battered their foreheads praying before *this* "idol" and denounced every attempt to *smash* these forms as anarchism

Marx deduced from the whole history of Socialism and of the political struggle that the state was bound to disappear, and that the transitional form of its disappearance (the transition from state to no state) would be the "proletariat organized as the ruling class " But Marx did not set out to *discover* the political *forms* of this future stage He limited himself to a precise observation of French history, to analysing it, and to the conclusion to which the year 1851 had led, *viz* , that matters were moving towards the *smashing* of the bourgeois state machine

And when the mass revolutionary movement of the proletariat burst *forth, Marx in spite of the* failure of that movement, in spite of its short life and its patent weakness, began to study the political forms it had *discovered*

The Commune *is the form* "at last discovered" by the proletarian revolution, under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour.

The Commune is the first attempt of a proletarian revolution to *smash* the bourgeois state machine and constitutes the political *form* "at last discovered" which can and must *supersede* the smashed machine

We shall see below that the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917, in different circumstances and under different conditions, continue the work of the Commune and corroborate Marx's brilliant historical analysis.

CHAPTER IV

CONTINUATION. SUPPLEMENTARY EXPLANATIONS BY ENGELS

Marx gave the fundamentals on the question of the significance of the experience of the Commune. Engels returned to the same subject repeatedly and explained Marx's analysis and conclusions, sometimes illuminating *other* sides of the question with such power and vividness that it is necessary to deal with his explanations separately.

1. "*The Housing Ques'ion*"

In his work, *The Housing Ques'ion* (1872), Engels took into account the experience of the Commune, and dealt several times with the tasks of the revolution in relation to the state. It is interesting to note that the treatment of this concrete subject revealed, on the one hand, points of similarity between the proletarian state and the present state—features which give grounds for speaking of the state in both cases—and, on the other hand, features which differentiate them, or the transition to the abolition of the state.

> "How is the housing question to be solved then? In present-day society, just as any other social question is solved: by the gradual economic adjustment of supply and demand, a solution which ever reproduces the question itself anew and therefore is no solution. How a social revolution would solve this question depends not only on the circumstances which would exist in each case, but is also connected with still more far-reaching questions, among which one of the most fundamental is the abolition of the antithesis between town and country. As it is not our task to create utopian systems for the arrangement of the future society, it would be more than idle to go into the question here. But one thing is certain: there are already in existence sufficient buildings for dwellings in the big towns to remedy immediately any real 'housing *shortage*,' given rational utilization of them. This can naturally only take place by the expropriation of the present owners and by quartering in their houses the homeless or those workers excessively overcrowded in their former houses. Immediately the proletariat has conquered political power such a measure dictated in the public interests will be just as easy to carry out as other expropriations and billetings are by the existing state." (P. 22 of the German edition of 1887.)

The change in the form of the state power is not discussed here, but only the content of its activity. Expropriations and occupation of houses take place by order even of the present state. From the formal point of view the proletarian state will also "order" the occupation of houses and expropriation of buildings. But it is clear that the old executive apparatus, the bureaucracy, which is connected with the bourgeoisie, would simply be unfit to carry out the orders of the proletarian state.

> ". . . For the rest it must be pointed out that the 'actual seizure' of all instruments of labour, the seizure of industry as a whole by the working people, is the exact contrary of the Proudhonist theory of 'gradual redemption.' Under the latter, the individual worker becomes the owner of the dwelling, the peasant farm, the instruments of labour; under the former, the 'working people' remain the collective owners of the houses, factories and instruments of labour, and would hardly permit their use, at least in a transitional period, by individuals or associations without compensation for the cost, just as the abolition of property in land is not the abolition of ground rent, but its transfer, although in a modified form, to society. The actual seizure of all the instruments of labour by the working people therefore does not at all exclude the retention of the rent relations." (P. 69.)

We shall discuss the question touched upon in this passage, namely, the economic reasons for the withering away of the state, in the next chapter. Engels expresses himself most cautiously, saying that the proletarian state would "hardly" permit, "at least in a transitional period," the use of houses without compensation for the cost. The letting of houses that belong to the whole people, to separate families presupposes the collection of rent, a certain amount of control, and a certain standard of allotment of houses. All this calls for a certain form of state, but it does not call for a special military and bureaucratic apparatus, with officials occupying especially privileged positions. The transition to a state of affairs when it will be possible to supply dwellings rent-free is bound up with the complete "withering away" of the state.

Speaking of the conversion of the Blanquists to the principles of Marxism after the Commune and as a result of its experience, Engels, in passing, formulates these principles as follows:

> ". . . Necessity of political action of the proletariat and of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the transitional stage to the abolition of classes and with them of the state. . . ." (P. 55.)

Addicts to hair-splitting criticism, and bourgeois "exterminators of Marxism," will perhaps see a contradiction between this *recognition* of the "abolition of the state" and the repudiation of this formula as an anarchist one in the previously-quoted passage from *Anti-Dühring.*

It would not be surprising if the opportunists stamped Engels, too, as an "anarchist," for the habit of accusing the internationalists of anarchism is becoming more and more widespread among the social-chauvinists.

Marxism has always taught that the state will be abolished with the abolition of classes. The well-known passage on the "withering away of the state" in *Anti-Dühring* does not blame the anarchists simply for being in favour of the abolition of the state, but for preaching that the state can be abolished "overnight."

In view of the fact that the now prevailing "Social-Democratic" doctrine completely distorts the relation of Marxism to anarchism on the question of the abolition of the state, it will be very useful to recall a certain controversy conducted by Marx and Engels with the anarchists.

2. *Controversy with the Anarchists*

This controversy took place in 1873. Marx and Engels contributed articles against the Proudhonists, "autonomists" or "anti-authoritarians," to an Italian Socialist annual, and it was not until 1913 that these articles appeared in German in *Neue Zeit.*

> "If the political struggle of the working class assumes violent forms," Marx wrote, ridiculing the anarchists and their repudiation of politics, "if the workers set up their revolutionary dictatorship in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, they commit the terrible crime of violating principles, for in order to satisfy their wretched, vulgar, everyday needs, in order to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie, instead of laying down their arms and abolishing the state, they give the state a revolutionary and transitory form. . . ." (*Neue Zeit*, Vol. XXXII, 1, 1913-14, p. 40.)

It was exclusively against this kind of "abolition" of the state that Marx fought in refuting the anarchists! He did not combat the theory that the state would disappear when classes disappeared, or that it would be abolished when classes were abolished; he opposed the proposition that the workers should renounce the use of arms, of organized force, *that is, the state*, which was to serve to "crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie."

To prevent the true meaning of his struggle against anarchism from being distorted, Marx deliberately emphasized the "revolutionary and *transitory* form" of the state which the proletariat needs. The proletariat needs the state only temporarily. We do not at all disagree with the anarchists on the question of the abolition of the state as an *aim*. We maintain that, to achieve this aim, we must temporarily make use of the instruments, resources and methods of the state power *against* the exploiters, just as the dictatorship of the oppressed class is temporarily necessary for

the abolition of classes. Marx chooses the sharpest and clearest way of stating his position against the anarchists: after overthrowing the yoke of the capitalists, should the workers "lay down their arms," or use them against the capitalists in order to crush their resistance? But what is the systematic use of arms by one class against the other, if not a "transitory form" of state?

Let every Social-Democrat ask himself: is *that* the way he has been puting the question of the state in controversy with the anarchists? Is *that* the way the vast majority of the official Socialist parties of the Second International have been putting it?

Engels enlarges on the same ideas in even greater detail and more popularly. First of all he ridicules the muddled ideas of the Proudhonites, who called themselves "anti-authoritarians," *i.e.*, repudiated every sort of authority, every sort of subordination, every sort of power. Take a factory, a railway, a ship on the high seas, said Engels—is it not clear that not one of these complex technical units, based on the employment of machinery and the ordered co-operation of many people, could function without a *certain amount of subordination and, consequently, without* a certain amount of authority or power?

> "When I put these arguments up against the most rabid anti-authoritarians," writes Engels, "they were only able to give me the *following answer: 'Ah! that is true, but here it is not a case of authority* which we confer on delegates, *but of a commission!*' these gentlemen think that they have changed the thing by changing its name. . . ."

Having thus shown that authority and autonomy are relative terms, that the sphere of their application varies with the various phases of social development, that it is absurd to take them as absolutes, and adding that the sphere of the application of machinery and large-scale production is constantly becoming enlarged, Engels passes from the general discussion of authority to the question of the state:

> ". . . If the autonomists," he wrote, "would confine themselves to saying that the social organization of the future will restrict authority to the limits in which the relations of production make it inevitable, we could understand each other, but they are blind to all facts which make the thing necessary, and they hurl themselves against the word.
>
> "Why don't the anti-authoritarians confine themselves to crying out against *political authority, against the state?* All Socialists are agreed that the state, and with it political authority, will disappear as the result of the coming social revolution, *i.e.*, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over real social interests. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the po-

litical state should be abolished at once, even before the social conditions which brought it into being have been abolished. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority.

"Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritarian thing there is, an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, all very authoritarian means; and the victorious party must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for having made too little use of this authority? Therefore either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are sowing nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the cause of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction." (P. 39.)

This argument touches upon questions which must be examined in connection with the relation between politics and economics during the "withering away" of the state (this is dealt with in the next chapter). These questions are: the transformation of public functions from political functions into simple functions of administration, and the "political state." This last term, one particularly liable to cause misunderstanding, indicates the process of the withering away of the state: at a certain stage of its withering away the moribund state can be called a non-political state.

Again, the most remarkable thing in this passage from Engels is the way he states the case against the anarchists. Social-Democrats, the would-be disciples of Engels, have discussed this question with the anarchists millions of times since 1873, but they have *not* discussed it as Marxists can and should. The anarchist idea of the abolition of the state is muddled and *non-revolutionary*—that is how Engels put it. It is precisely the revolution in its rise and development, with its specific tasks in relation to violence, authority, power, the state, that the anarchists do not wish to see.

This usual criticism of anarchism by present-day Social-Democrats has been reduced to the purest philistine banality: "We recognize the state, whereas the anarchists do not!" Naturally, such banality cannot but repel revolutionary workers who think at all. Engels says something different. He emphasizes the fact that all Socialists admit that the state will disappear as a result of the Socialist revolution. He then deals with the concrete question of the revolution—the very question which, as a rule, the Social-Democrats, because of their opportunism, evade, and

leave, so to speak, exclusively for the anarchists "to work out." And in dealing with this question, Engels takes the bull by the horns; he asks: should *not* the Commune have made *more* use of the *revolutionary* power of the *state*, that is, of the armed proletariat organized as the ruling class?

Prevailing official Social-Democracy usually dismissed the question of the concrete tasks of the proletariat in the revolution either with a philistine sneer, or, at best, with the sophistic evasion: "wait and see." And the anarchists were thus *justified in saying about such Social-Democracy* that it had betrayed its task of educating the working class for the revolution. Engels utilizes the experience of the last proletarian revolution precisely for the purpose of making a very concrete study of what the proletariat should do in relation to the banks and the state, and how it should do it.

3. *Letter to Bebel*

One of the most, if not the most, remarkable observations on the state in the works of Marx and Engels is contained in the following passage in Engels' letter to Bebel dated March 18-28, 1875. This letter, we may observe in passing, was, as far as we know, first published by Bebel in the second volume of his memoirs (*Aus meinem Leben*), which appeared in 1911, *i.e.*, thirty-six years after it had been written and mailed.

Engels wrote to Bebel criticizing the very draft of the Gotha Program which Marx also *criticized in his* famous *letter to* Bracke. Referring particularly to the question of the state, Engels said:

> ". . . The free people's state is transformed into the free state. Taken in its grammatical sense a free state is one where the state is free in relation to its citizens and is therefore a state with a despotic government. The whole talk about the state should be dropped, especially since the Commune, which was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. The 'people's state' has been thrown *in our faces by the anarchists too long,* although Marx's book against Proudhon and later *The Communist Manifesto* directly declare that with the introduction of the Socialist order of society the state will dissolve of itself [*sich auflöst*] and disappear. As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state; so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist. We would therefore propose to replace the word '*state*' everywhere by the word *Gemeinwesen* [*community*], a good old German word which can very well represent the French word *commune*." (P. 322 of the German original.)

It must be borne in mind that this letter refers to the party program which Marx criticized in a letter dated only a few weeks later than the above (Marx's letter is dated May 5, 1875), and that at the time Engels was living with Marx in London. Consequently, when he says "we" in the last sentence, Engels undoubtedly, in his own as well as in Marx's name, suggests to the leader of the German workers' party that the word "state" *be struck out of the program* and replaced by the word "*community*."

What a howl about "anarchism" would be raised by the leaders of present-day "Marxism," which has been faked for the convenience of the opportunists, if such a rectification of the program were suggested to them!

Let them howl. The bourgeoisie will praise them for it.

But we shall go on with our work. In revising the program of our Party we must unfailingly take the advice of Engels and Marx into consideration in order to come nearer the truth, to restore Marxism by purging it of distortions, to guide the struggle of the working class for its emancipation more correctly. Certainly no objections to the advice of Engels and Marx will be found among the Bolsheviks. The only difficulty that may, perhaps, arise will be in regard to terminology. In German there are two words meaning "community," of which Engels used the one which does *not* denote a single community, but a totality, a system of communities. In Russian there is no such word, and perhaps we may have to decide to use the French word "commune," although this also has its drawbacks.

"The Commune was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word"—this is the highly important theoretical statement Engels makes. After what has been said above, this statement is perfectly clear. The Commune *was ceasing* to be a state in so far as it had to repress, not the majority of the population, but a minority (the exploiters); it had smashed the bourgeois state machine; in place of a *special* repressive force, the whole population itself came on the scene. All this was a departure from the state in the proper sense of the word. And had the Commune lasted, all traces of the state in it would have "withered away" of themselves; it would not have been necessary for it to "abolish" the institutions of the state; they would have ceased to function in the measure that they ceased to have anything to do.

"The people's state has been thrown in our faces by the anarchists." In saying this, Engels had Bakunin and his attacks on the German Social-Democrats particularly in mind. Engels admitted that these attacks were justified *in so far* as the "people's state" was as much an absurdity and as much a departure from Socialism as the "free people's state." Engels tried to put the struggle of the German Social-Democrats against the anarchists on right lines, to make this struggle correct in principle, to purge it of opportunist prejudices concerning the "state." Alas! Engels' letter was pigeonholed for thirty-six years. We shall see below that, even after

Engels' letter was published, Kautsky obstinately repeated what in essence were the very mistakes against which Engels had uttered his warning

Bebel replied to Engels in a letter, dated September 21, 1875, in which he wrote *inter alia*, that he "fully agrees" with Engels' criticism of the draft program, and that he had reproached Liebknecht for his readiness to make concessions (p 304 of the German edition of Bebel's *Memoirs*, Vol II) But if we take Bebel's pamphlet, *Our Aims*, we find there arguments on the state that are absolutely wrong

> "The state must be transformed from one based on *class rule* into a *people's state* " (German edition *Unsere Ziele*, 1886, p 14)

This is printed in the *ninth* (the ninth!) edition of Bebel's pamphlet! It is not surprising that such persistently repeated opportunist views on the state were absorbed by German Social Democracy, especially as Engels' revolutionary interpretations had been safely pigeonholed, and all the conditions of life were such as to "wean" the people from revolution for a long time!

4 *Criticism of the Draft of the Erfurt Program**

In examining the Marxian doctrine of the state, the criticism of the draft of the Erfurt Program sent by Engels to Kautsky on June 29, 1891, a criticism published only ten years later in *Neue Zeit*, cannot be ignored, for this criticism is mainly concerned with the *opportunist* views of Social Democracy on questions of *state* structure

We shall note in passing that Engels also makes an exceedingly valuable observation on questions of economics, which shows how attentively and thoughtfully he watched the changes in modern capitalism, and how he was able to foresee to a certain extent the tasks of our own, the imperialist, epoch Here is the passage referring to the word "planlessness" (*Planlosigkeit*) used in the draft program, as characteristic of capitalism, Engels writes

> "When we pass from joint stock companies to trusts which control and monopolize whole branches of industry, it is not only private production that ceases, but also planlessness" (*Neue Zeit*, Vol. XX, 1, 1901 02, p 8).

Here we have what is most essential in the theoretical appraisal of the latest phase of capitalism, *i e* , imperialism, *viz* , that capitalism becomes monopoly *capitalism* The latter must be emphasized because the erroneous bourgeois reformist assertion that monopoly capitalism or state monopoly capitalism is *no longer* capitalism, but can already be termed "state Socialism," or something of that sort, is very widespread The trusts, of course,

* *Erfurt Program*—the program adopted at the Erfurt Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany in 1891 —*Ed*

have not created, do not create now, and cannot create full and complete planning. But to whatever extent they do plan, to whatever extent the capitalist magnates calculate in advance the volume of production on a national and even on an international scale, and to whatever extent they systematically regulate it, we still remain *under capitalism*—capitalism in its new stage, it is true, but still, undoubtedly, capitalism. The "proximity," of *such* capitalism to Socialism should serve the genuine representatives of the proletariat as proof of the proximity, ease, feasibility and urgency of the Socialist revolution, and not as an argument in favour of tolerating the repudiation of such a revolution or in favour of making capitalism look more attractive, an occupation in which all the reformists are engaged.

But let us return to the question of the state. In this letter Engels makes three valuable suggestions: first, as regards the republic; second, as regards the connection between the national question and the form of state, and, third, as regards local self-government.

As regards the republic, Engels made this the centre of gravity of his criticism of the draft of the Erfurt Program. And when we remember what importance the Erfurt Program has acquired in the whole of international Social-Democracy, that it has become the model for the whole of the Second International, it may be said without exaggeration that Engels thereby criticized the opportunism of the whole Second International.

> "The political demands of the draft," Engels writes, "have one great fault. What actually ought to be said *is not there*. . . ." (Engels' italics.)

And, later on, he makes it clear that the German constitution is but a copy of the very reactionary constitution of 1850; that the Reichstag is only, as Wilhelm Liebknecht put it, "the fig-leaf of absolutism"; and that to wish "to transform all the instruments of labour into public property" on the basis of a constitution which legalizes the existence of petty states and the federation of petty German states is an "obvious absurdity."

"To touch on that is dangerous, however," Engels adds, knowing full well that it is impossible, for reasons of legality, to include in the program the demand for a republic in Germany. But Engels does not rest content with this obvious argument which satisfied "everybody." He continues:

> "And yet somehow or other the thing has got to be attacked. . . . How necessary this is is shown precisely at the present time by the inroads which opportunism is making in a great section of the Social-Democratic press. For fear of a revival of the Anti-Socialist Law and from recollection of all manner of premature utterances which were let fall during the reign of that law the present legal position of the Party in Germany is now all of a sudden to be treated as sufficient for the carrying out of all the demands of the Party by peaceful means."

Engels particularly stresses the fundamental fact that the German Social-Democrats were prompted by fear of a revival of the Anti-Socialist Law,* and unhesitatingly calls this opportunism; he declares that precisely because there was no republic and *no freedom in Germany, the dreams of a* "peaceful" path were absolutely absurd. Engels is sufficiently careful not to tie his hands. He admits that in republican or very free countries "one *can conceive*" (*only* "conceive!") of a peaceful development towards Socialism, but in Germany, he repeats,

> "in Germany, where the government is almost almighty and the Reichstag and all other representative bodies have no real power, to proclaim such a thing in Germany—and moreover when there is no need to do so—is to remove the fig-leaf *from* absolutism, and become oneself a screen for its nakedness."

The great majority of the official leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party, who pigeonholed this advice, have indeed proved to be a screen for absolutism.

> "Ultimately such a *policy can only lead one's own party astray*. General abstract political questions have been put into the foreground, concealing thus the immediate concrete questions, the *questions which at the first great events, the first political crisis*, put themselves on the agenda. What can result from this except that at the decisive moment the Party is suddenly left without guidance, that unclarity and disunity reign on the most decisive points because these points have never been discussed? . . .
>
> "This forgetfulness of the great main standpoint in the momentary interests of the day, this struggling and striving for the success of the moment without consideration for the later consequences, this sacrifice of the future of the movement for its present may be 'honestly' meant, but it is and remains opportunism, and 'honest' opportunism is perhaps the most dangerous of all. . . .
>
> "If one thing is certain it is that our Party and the working class can only come to power under the form of the democratic republic. This is even the specific form for the dictatorship of the proletariat as the Great French Revolution has already shown. . . ."

Engels repeats here in a particularly striking manner the fundamental idea which runs like a red thread through all of Marx's works, namely, that *the democratic* republic is the *nearest* approach to the dictatorship of the proletariat. For such a republic—without in the least abolishing the domination of capital, and, therefore, the oppression of the masses and the class struggle—*inevitably* leads to *such an extension,* development, unfolding

* *Anti-Socialist Law*—the law introduced by Bismarck in 1878, the express purpose of which was to suppress the Social-Democratic movement in Germany. It was repealed in 1890 after a long struggle.—*Ed.*

and intensification of that struggle that, as soon as the possibility arises of satisfying the fundamental interests of the oppressed masses, this possibility is achieved inevitably and solely in the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the leadership of those masses by the proletariat. These, too, are "forgotten words" of Marxism for the whole of the Second International, and this forgetfulness was demonstrated with particular vividness by the history of the Menshevik Party in the first half year of the Russian Revolution of 1917.

On the question of a federal republic, in connection with the national composition of the population, Engels wrote:

> "What should take the place of present-day Germany?" (with its reactionary monarchical constitution and its equally reactionary division into petty states, which perpetuates all the specific features of "Prussianism" instead of dissolving them in Germany as a whole). "In my view, the proletariat can only use the form of the one and indivisible republic. In the gigantic territory of the United States a federal republic is still, on the whole, a necessity, although in the Eastern states it is already becoming a hindrance. It would be a step forward in England, where the two islands are peopled by four nations and in spite of a single Parliament three different systems of legislation exist side by side even today. In little Switzerland, it has long been a hindrance, tolerable only because Switzerland is content to be a purely passive member of the European state system. For Germany, federation of the Swiss type would be an enormous step backward. Two points distinguish a federal state from a unitary state: first, that each separate federated state, each canton, has its own civil and criminal legislative and judicial system, and, second, that alongside of a popular chamber there is also a federal chamber in which each canton, large or small, votes as such."

In Germany the federal state is the transitional stage to the complete unitary state, and the "revolution from above" of 1866 and 1870* must not be reversed but supplemented by a "movement from below."

Engels did not display indifference to the question of the forms of state; on the contrary, he tried to analyse the transitional forms with the utmost care in order to establish, in accordance with the concrete, historical, specific features of each separate case, *from what and into what* the given transitional form is evolving.

From the point of view of the proletariat and the proletarian revolution Engels, like Marx, insisted on democratic centralism, on one indivisible

* Engels refers here to the reunion of the dismembered German state into a single state which was being carried out by the ruling clique of Prussia "from above," by military force. Prussia's war against Austria in 1866 led to the formation of the North-German confederation of German states: the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 resulted in the founding of the German empire headed by Prussia.—*Ed.*

republic He regarded the federal republic either as an exception and a hindrance to development, or as a transitional form from a monarchy to a centralized republic, as a "step forward" *under certain special conditions* And in these special conditions, the national question comes to the front

In spite of their ruthless criticism of the reactionary nature of small states, and, in certain concrete cases, the screening of this by the national question, Engels and Marx never betrayed a trace of a desire to evade the national question—a desire of which the Dutch and Polish Marxists are often guilty, as a result of their very justifiable opposition to the narrow philistine nationalism of "their" little states

Even in regard to England, where geographical conditions, a common language and the history of many centuries would seem to have "put an end" *to the national question in the separate small divisions of England*—even in regard to this country, Engels took into account the patent fact that the national question had not yet been settled, and recognized in consequence that the establishment of a federal republic would be a "step forward " Of course, there is not a trace here of an attempt to abandon the criticism of the defects of a federal republic or the most determined propaganda and struggle for a united and centralized democratic republic

But Engels did not interpret democratic centralism in the bureaucratic sense in which this term is used by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologists, including the anarchists. His interpretation did not in the least preclude such wide local self government as would combine the voluntary defence of the unity of the state by the "communes" and districts with the complete abolition of all bureaucracy and all "ordering" from above Enlarging *on the program views of Marxism on the state,* Engels wrote

> "So, then, a unitary republic—but not in the sense of the present French Republic, which is nothing but the Empire established in 1798 minus the Emperor From 1792 to 1798 each Department of France, each commune (*Gemeinde*), enjoyed complete self government *on the American model*, and this is what we too must have How self government is to be organized and how we can manage without a bureaucracy has been shown by America and the first French Republic, and is being shown even today by *Canada, Australia* and the other English colonies And a provincial and local self government of this type is far freer than Swiss federalism under which, it is true, the canton is very independent in relation to the *Bund*" (*i e* , the federated state as a whole), "but is also independent in relation to the district and the commune The cantonal governments appoint the district governors (*Bezirksstatthalter*) and prefects—a feature which is unknown in English speaking countries and which we shall have *to* abolish here in the future along with the Prussian *Landrate* and *Regierungsrate*" (commissaries, district police chiefs, governors, and in general all officials appointed from above).

Accordingly, Engels proposes the following wording for the clause in the program on self-government:

> "Complete self-government for the provinces" (districts and communities) "through officials elected by universal suffrage. The abolition of all local and provincial authorities appointed by the state."

I have already had occasion to point out—in *Pravda* (No. 68, May 28, 1917), which was suppressed by the government of Kerensky and other "Socialist" Ministers*—how in this connection (of course, not only in this connection by any means) our alleged Socialist representatives of alleged-revolutionary alleged-democracy have departed *from democracy* in the most scandalous manner. Naturally, people who have bound themselves by a "coalition" with the imperialist bourgeoisie have remained deaf to this criticism.

It is extremely important to note that Engels, armed with facts, disproves by a precise example the prejudice that is very widespread, particularly among petty-bourgeois democrats, that a federal republic necessarily means a greater amount of freedom than a centralized republic. This is not true. It is disproved by the facts cited by Engels regarding the centralized French Republic of 1792-98 and the federal Swiss Republic. The really democratic centralized republic gave *more* freedom than the federal republic. In other words, the *greatest* amount of local, provincial and other freedom known in history was granted by a *centralized* and not by a federal republic.

Insufficient attention has been and is being paid to this fact in our Party propaganda and agitation, as, indeed, to the whole question of federal and centralized republics and local self-government.

5. *The 1891 Introduction to Marx's "The Civil War in France"*

In his Introduction to the third edition of *The Civil War in France* (this Introduction is dated March 18, 1891, and was originally published in the *Neue Zeit*), Engels, in addition to many other interesting incidental remarks on questions connected with the attitude towards the state, gives a remarkably striking résumé of the lessons of the Commune. This résumé, which was rendered more profound by the entire experience of the twenty years that separated the author from the Commune, and which was directed particularly against the "superstitious belief in the state" so widespread in Germany, may justly be called the *last word* of Marxism on the question dealt with here.

In France, Engels observes, the workers were armed after every revolution:

---

* See "A Question of Principle. 'Forgotten Words' of Democracy" in Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. XX, Book. II.—*Ed.*

" therefore the disarming of the workers was the first com: ment of the bourgeois at the helm of the state Hence, after revolution won by the workers, a new struggle, ending with t: feat of the workers '

This resume of the experience of bourgeois revolutions is as conc it is expressive The essence of the matter—also, by the way, of the tion of the state (*has the oppressed class arms?*)—is remarkably well defined It is precisely this essential thing which is often ignored by professors, who are influenced by bourgeois ideolo; well as by petty bourgeois democrats In the Russian Revolution of the honour (Cavaignac honour) of blabbing this secret of bourgeois lution fell to the Menshevik, "also Marxist," Tsereteli In his "hist speech of June 9, Tsereteli blurted out the determination of the bou: sie to disarm the Petrograd workers—referring, of course, to this dec as his own, and as a vital necessity for the "state '!

Tsereteli s historic speech of June 9 will, of course, serve every his an of the Revolution of 1917 as one of the most striking illustratio: how the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik bloc, led by Mr Tser deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie *against* the revolutionary proleta

Another incidental remark of Engels', also connected with the ques of the state, deals with religion It is well known that German Social mocracy, as it decayed and became more and more opportunist, slipped r and more frequently into the philistine misinterpretation of the celebr formula "Religion is a private matter ' That is, this formula was twi to mean that religion was a private matter *even for the party* of the rev tionary proletariat!! It was against this utter betrayal of the revolutior program of the proletariat that Engels protested In 1891 he saw only *very feeble* beginnings of opportunism in his party, and, therefore, expressed himself on the subject very cautiously

" As almost without exception workers, or recognized represer tives of the workers, sat in the Commune, its decisions bore a decide proletarian character Either they decreed reforms which the rep lican bourgeoisie had failed to pass solely out of cowardice, but wh provided a necessary basis for the free activity of the working cl —such as the realization of the principle that *in relation to the sta* religion is a purely private matter—or they promulgated decr which were in the direct interests of the working class and to so extent cut deeply into the old order of society "

Engels deliberately emphasized the words "in relation to the stat as a straight thrust at the German opportunism, which had declared re gion to be a private matter *in relation to the party*, thus degrading the pa of the revolutionary proletariat to the level of the most vulgar '*free thi* ing" philistinism, which is prepared to allow a non denominational st

tus, but which renounces the *party* struggle against the religious opium which stupefies the people.

The future historian of German Social-Democracy, in investigating the basic causes of its shameful collapse in 1914, will find no lack of interesting material on this question, from the evasive declarations in the articles of the ideological leader of the party, Kautsky, which open wide the door to opportunism, to the attitude of the Party towards the *Los-von-Kirche-Bewegung* (the "leave the church" movement) in 1913.

But let us see how, twenty years after the Commune, Engels summed up its lessons for the fighting proletariat.

Here are the lessons to which Engels attached prime importance:

> ". . . It was precisely the oppressing power of the former centralized government, army, political police and bureaucracy, which Napoleon had created in 1798 and since then had been taken over by every new government as a welcome instrument and used against its opponents, it was precisely this power which was to fall everywhere, just as it had already fallen in Paris.
>
> "From the outset the Commune was compelled to recognize that the working class, once come to power, could not manage with the old state machine; that in order not to lose again its only just conquered supremacy, this working class must, on the one hand, do away with all the old repressive machinery previously used against it itself, and, on the other, safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials, by declaring them all, without exception, subject to recall at any moment. . . ."

Engels emphasizes again and again that the state remains a state, *i.e.*, it retains its fundamental characteristic feature of transforming the officials, the "servants of society," its organs, into the *masters* of society not only under a monarchy, but *also in a democratic republic.*

> "Against this transformation of the state and the organs of the state from servants of society into masters of society—an inevitable transformation in all previous states—the Commune made use of two infallible expedients. In the first place, it filled all posts—administrative, judicial and educational—by election on the basis of universal suffrage of all concerned, with the right of the same electors to recall their delegate at any time. And, in the second place, all officials, high or low, were paid only the wages received by other workers. The highest salary paid by the Commune to anyone was 6,000 francs.* In this way, an effective barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up, even apart from the binding mandates to delegates to representative bodies which were also added in profusion. . . ."

* Nominally about 2,400 rubles; according to the present rate of exchange about 6,000 rubles. Those Bolsheviks who propose that a salary of 9,000 rubles

Engels here approaches the interesting boundary line at which consistent democracy is *transformed* into Socialism and at which it *demands* Socialism For, in order to abolish the state, the functions of the civil service must be converted into the simple operations of control and accounting that can be performed by the vast majority of the population, and, ultimately, by every single individual And in order to abolish careerism completely it must be made *i m p o s s i b l e* for 'honourable" though unremunerated posts in the public service to be used as a springboard to highly remunerative posts in banks or joint stock companies, as *constantly* happens in all the freest capitalist countries

But Engels did not make the mistake some Marxists make in dealing, for example, with the right of nations to self determination, when they argue that this is impossible under capitalism and will be unnecessary under Socialism Such a seemingly clever but really incorrect statement might be made in regard to *any* democratic institution, including moderate salaries for officials, because fully consistent democracy is impossible under capitalism, and under Socialism all democracy *withers away*

It is a sophistry that is similar to the old humourous problem will a man become bald if he loses one more hair?

To develop democracy *to its logical conclusion*, to find the *forms* for this development, to test them *by practice*, and so forth—all this is one of the constituent tasks of the struggle for the social revolution Taken separately, no sort of democracy will bring Socialism But in actual life democracy will never be "taken separately", it will be "taken together" with other things, it will exert its influence on economics, will stimulate *its* transformation, and in its turn it will be influenced by economic development, and so on Such are the dialectics of living history

Engels continues

> "This shattering (*Sprengung*) of the former state power and its replacement by a new and really democratic state is described in detail in the third section of *The Civil War* But it was necessary to dwell briefly here once more on some of its features, because in Germany particularly the superstitious belief in the state has been carried over from philosophy into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers According to the philosophical notion, the state is the 'realization of the idea,' or the Kingdom of God on earth, translated into philosophical terms, the sphere in which eternal truth and justice is or should be realized And from this follows a superstitious reverence for the state and everything connected with it, which takes root the more readily as people from their childhood are accustomed to imagine that the affairs and inter-

---

be paid to members of municipal councils, for instance, instead of a maximum salary of 6,000 rubles—quite an adequate sum—*for the whole state* are committing an unpardonable error

ests common to the whole of society could not be looked after otherwise than as they have been looked after in the past, that is, through the state and its well-paid officials. And people think they have taken quite an extraordinarily bold step forward when they have rid themselves of belief in hereditary monarchy and swear by the democratic republic. In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy; and at best an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the victorious proletariat, just like the Commune, cannot avoid having to lop off at the earliest possible moment, until such time as a new generation, reared in new and free social conditions, will be able to throw the entire lumber of the state on the scrap-heap."

Engels warned the Germans not to forget the fundamentals of Socialism on the question of the state in general in connection with the substitution of a republic for the monarchy. His warnings now read like a lecture to Messrs. Tsereteli and Chernov, who in their "coalition" practice revealed a superstitious belief in and a superstitious reverence for the state!

Two more points. First: the fact that Engels said that in a democratic republic, "no less" than in a monarchy, the state remains a "machine for the oppression of one class by another" does not signify that the *form* of oppression is a matter of indifference to the proletariat, as some anarchists "teach." A wider, freer and more open *form* of the class struggle and of class oppression greatly assists the proletariat in its struggle for the abolition of all classes.

Second: why will only a new generation be able to throw the entire lumber of the state on the scrap-heap? This question is bound up with the question of overcoming democracy, with which we shall deal now.

6. *Engels on Overcoming Democracy*

Engels had occasion to speak on this subject in connection with the question of the term "Social-Democrat" being *scientifically* wrong.

In a preface to an edition of his articles of the 'seventies on various subjects, mainly on "international" questions (*Internationales aus dem Volksstaat*), dated January 3, 1894, *i.e.*, written a year and a half before his death, Engels wrote that in all his articles he used the word "Communist" *not* "Social-Democrat," because at that time it was the Proudhonites in France and the Lassalleans in Germany who called themselves Social-Democrats.

"For Marx and me it was therefore quite impossible to choose such an elastic term to characterize our special point of view. Today

> things are different, and the word ["Social Democrat"] may perhaps pass muster [*mag passieren*], however unsuitable [*unpassend*] it still is for a party whose economic program is not merely Socialist in general, but directly Communist, and whose ultimate political aim is to overcome the whole state and therefore democracy as well The names of *genuine* [Engels' italics] political parties, however, are never wholly appropriate, the party develops while the name persists

The dialectician Engels remains true to dialectics to the end of his days Marx and I, he says, had a splendid, scientifically exact name for the party but there was no real party, *i e*, no proletarian mass party Now, at the end of the nineteenth century, there is a real party, but its name is scientifically inexact Never mind, it will 'pass muster," if only the party *develops*, if only the scientific inexactness of its name is not hidden from it and does not hinder its development in the right direction!

Perhaps some humourist will begin consoling us Bolsheviks in the manner of Engels we have a genuine party, it is developing splendidly, even such a meaningless and ugly term as "Bolshevik" will 'pass muster,' although it expresses nothing but the purely accidental fact that at the Brussels London Congress of 1903 we were in the majority*. Perhaps, now that the persecution of our Party by republican and "revolutionary' petty bourgeois democracy in July and August has made the name "Bolshevik" such a universally respected one, that, in addition, this persecution signalizes the great historical progress our Party has made in its *actual* development, even I would hesitate to insist on the suggestion I made in April to change the name of our Party Perhaps I would propose a "compromise" to our comrades, *viz*, to call ourselves the Communist Party, but to retain the word "Bolsheviks" in brackets

But the question of the name of the Party is incomparably less important than the question of the attitude of the revolutionary proletariat to the state

---

* [illegible] the Russian Social Democratic Labou[illegible] 03 The congress first met in Brusse[illegible] sferred its sittings to London The Second Congress plays an enormous part in the history of the Party It was at this congress that the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party was actually formed, it was at this congress that a Party Program and Rules were adopted and the central leading organs of the Party set up The struggle between the two trends within the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (the revolutionary trend—led by Lenin, and the opportunist—led by Martov) developed at the congress mainly around questions of organization and resulted in the Party splitting into two groups Bolsheviks and Mensheviks These names are connected with the results of the elections to the central leading organs of the Party Lenin s followers who received the majority of votes in the elections at the congress, have since been called Bolsheviks (from *bolshinstvo* majority) and Lenin s opponents, who received the minority of votes have since been called Mensheviks (from *menshinstvo* mino ity) —*Ed*

In the arguments usually advanced about the state, the mistake is constantly made against which Engels uttered his warning and which we have in passing indicated above, namely, it is constantly forgotten that the abolition of the state means also the abolition of democracy; that the withering away of the state means the withering away of democracy.

At first sight this assertion seems exceedingly strange and incomprehensible; indeed, someone may even begin to fear that we are expecting the advent of an order of society in which the principle of the subordination of the minority to the majority will not be respected—for is not democracy the recognition of this principle?

No, democracy is *not* identical with the subordination of the minority to the majority. Democracy is a *state* which recognizes the subordination of the minority to the majority, *i.e.*, an organization for the systematic use of *violence* by one class against the other, by one section of the population against another.

We set ourselves the ultimate aim of abolishing the state, *i.e.*, all organized and systematic violence, all use of violence against man in general. We do not expect the advent of an order of society in which the principle of the subordination of the minority to the majority will not be observed. But in striving for Socialism we are convinced that it will develop into Communism and, hence, that the need for violence against people in general, the need for the *subjection* of one man to another, and of one section of the population to another, will vanish, since people will *become accustomed* to observing the elementary conditions of social life *without force* and *without subordination*.

In order to emphasize this element of habit, Engels speaks of a new *generation*, "reared in new and free social conditions," which "will be able to throw the entire lumber of the state"—of every kind of state, including even the democratic-republican state—"on the scrap-heap."

In order to explain this it is necessary to examine the question of the economic basis of the withering away of the state.

CHAPTER V

THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE WITHERING AWAY OF THE STATE

Marx explains this question most thoroughly in his *Critique of the Gotha Program* (letter to Bracke, May 5, 1875, which was not printed until 1891 in *Neue Zeit*, Vol. IX, 1, and which has appeared in a special Russian edition). The polemical part of this remarkable work, which consists of a criticism of Lassalleanism, has, so to speak, overshadowed its positive part, namely, the analysis of the connection between the development of Communism and the withering away of the state.

1. Marx's Presentation of the Question

From a superficial comparison of Marx's letter to Bracke of May 5, 1875, with Engels' letter to Bebel of March 28, 1875, which we examined above, it might appear that Marx was much more "pro-state" than Engels, and that the difference of opinion between the two writers on the question of the state was very considerable.

Engels suggested to Bebel that all the chatter about the state be dropped; that the word "state" be eliminated from the program altogether and the word "community" substituted for it. Engels even declared that the Commune was really no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. Yet Marx spoke of the "future state in Communist society," *i.e.*, as though he recognized the need for a state even under Communism.

But such a view would be fundamentally wrong. A closer examination shows that Marx's and Engels' views on the state and its withering away were completely identical, and that Marx's expression quoted above refers merely to this *withering away* of the state.

Clearly there can be no question of defining the exact moment of the *future* "withering away"—the more so since it must obviously be a rather lengthy process. The apparent difference between Marx and Engels is due to the different subjects they dealt with, the different aims they were pursuing. Engels set out to show Bebel plainly, sharply and in broad outline the absurdity of the prevailing prejudices concerning the state, which were shared to no small degree by Lassalle. Marx only touched upon *this* question in passing, being interested in another subject, *viz.*, the *development* of Communist society.

The whole theory of Marx is an application of the theory of development—in its most consistent, complete, thought-out and replete form—to modern capitalism. Naturally, Marx was faced with the question of applying this theory both to the *forthcoming* collapse of capitalism and to the *future* development of *future* Communism.

On the basis of what *data* can the question of the future development of future Communism be raised?

On the basis of the fact that *it has its origin* in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism *has given birth*. There is no trace of an attempt on Marx's part to conjure up a utopia, to make idle guesses about what cannot be known. Marx treats the question of Communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development, say, of a new biological species, if he knew that such and such was its origin and such and such the direction in which it was changing.

Marx, first of all, brushes aside the confusion the Gotha Program brings into the question of the relation between state and society. He writes:

> "'Present-day society' is capitalist society, which exists in all civilized countries, more or less free from mediaeval admixture,

more or less modified by the special historical development of each country and more or less developed. On the other hand, the 'present-day state' changes with a country's frontier. It is different in the Prusso-German Empire from what it is in Switzerland, it is different in England from what it is in the United States. The 'present-day state' is therefore a fiction.

"Nevertheless, the different states of the different civilized countries, in spite of their manifold diversity of form, all have this in common, that they are based on modern bourgeois society, only one more or less capitalistically developed. They have, therefore, also certain essential features in common. In this sense it is possible to speak of the 'present-day state,' in contrast to the future, in which its present root, bourgeois society, will have died away.

"The question then arises: what transformation will the state undergo in Communist society? In other words, what social functions will remain in existence there that are analogous to the present functions of the state? This question can only be answered scientifically and one does not get a flea-hop nearer to the problem by a thousandfold combination of the word people with the word state. . . ."

Having thus ridiculed all talk about a "people's state," Marx formulates the question and warns us, as it were, that to arrive at a scientific answer one must rely only on firmly established scientific data.

The first fact that has been established with complete exactitude by the whole theory of development, by science as a whole—a fact which the utopians forgot, and which is forgotten by the present-day opportunists who are afraid of the Socialist revolution—is that, historically, there must undoubtedly be a special stage or a special phase of *transition* from capitalism to Communism.

2. *The Transition from Capitalism to Communism*

Marx continues:

"Between capitalist and Communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*"

Marx bases this conclusion on an analysis of the role played by the proletariat in modern capitalist society, on the data concerning the development of this society, and on the irreconcilability of the antagonistic interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Earlier the question was put in this way: in order to achieve its eman-

cipation, the proletariat must overthrow the bourgeoisie, conquer political power and establish its revolutionary dictatorship

Now the question is put somewhat differently the transition from capitalist society—which is developing towards Communism—to a Communist society is impossible without a "political transition period," and the state in this period can only be the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat

What, then, is the relation of this dictatorship to democracy?

We have seen that *The Communist Manifesto* simply places the two ideas side by side "to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class" and "to win the battle of democracy " On the basis of all that has been said above, it is possible to determine more precisely how democracy changes in the transition from capitalism to Communism

In capitalist society, under the conditions most favourable to its development, we have more or less complete democracy in the democratic republic But this democracy is always restricted by the narrow framework of capitalist exploitation, and consequently always remains, in reality, a democracy for the minority, only for the possessing classes, only for the rich Freedom in capitalist society always remains about the same as it was in the ancient Greek republics freedom for the slave owners Owing to the conditions of capitalist exploitation the modern wage slaves are so crushed by want and poverty that "they cannot be bothered with democracy," "they cannot be bothered with politics", in the ordinary peaceful course of events the majority of the population is debarred from participating in social and political life

The correctness of this statement is perhaps most clearly proved by Germany, precisely because in that country constitutional legality lasted and remained stable for a remarkably long time—for nearly half a century (1871 1914)—and Social Democracy during this period was able to achieve far more in Germany than in other countries in the way of "utilizing legality," and was able to organize a larger proportion of the workers into a political party than anywhere else in the world

What is this largest proportion of politically conscious and active wage slaves that has so far been observed in capitalist society? One million members of the Social Democratic Party—out of fifteen million wage workers! Three million organized in trade unions—out of fifteen million!

Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich—that is the democracy of capitalist society If we look more closely into the mechanism of capitalist democracy, everywhere, in the "petty"—so called petty—details of the suffrage (residential qualification, exclusion of women, etc), in
obstacles to
in the pure
we see restriction after restriction upon democracy These restrictions, exceptions, exclusions, obstacles for the poor, seem slight, especially in the eyes of one who has never known want himself and has never been in

close contact with the oppressed classes in their mass life (and nine-tenths if not ninety-nine hundredths, of the bourgeois publicists and politicians are of this category); but in their sum total these restrictions exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics, from taking an active part in democracy.

Marx grasped this *essence* of capitalist democracy splendidly, when, in analysing the experience of the Commune, he said that the oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class should represent and repress them in parliament!

But from this capitalist democracy—inevitably narrow, tacitly repelling the poor, and therefore hypocritical and false to the core—forward development does not proceed simply, directly and smoothly to "greater and greater democracy," as the liberal professors and petty-bourgeois opportunists would have us believe. No, forward development, *i.e.*, towards Communism, proceeds through the dictatorship of the proletariat, and cannot do otherwise, for the *resistance* of the capitalist exploiters cannot be *broken* by anyone else or in any other way.

But the dictatorship of the proletariat, *i.e.*, the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of crushing the oppressors, cannot result merely in an expansion of democracy. *Simultaneously* with an immense expansion of democracy, which *for the first time* becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich, the dictatorship of the proletariat imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists. We must crush them in order to free humanity from wage-slavery; their resistance must be broken by force; it is clear that where there is suppression, where there is coercion, there is no freedom and no democracy.

Engels expressed this splendidly in his letter to Bebel when he said, as the reader will remember, that

> "... so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist."

Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force, *i.e.*, exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people—this is the change democracy undergoes during the *transition* from capitalism to Communism.

Only in Communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely broken, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (*i.e.*, when there is no difference between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production), *only* then does "the state . . . cease to exist," and it "*becomes possible to speak of freedom*." Only then will really complete democracy, democracy with-

out any exceptions, be possible and be realized. And only then will democracy begin to *wither away*, owing to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually *become accustomed* to observing the elementary rules of social intercourse that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims; they will become accustomed to observing them without force, without compulsion, without subordination, *without the special apparatus* for compulsion which is called the state.

The expression "the state *withers away*" is very well chosen, for it indicates both the gradual and the spontaneous nature of the process. Only habit can, and undoubtedly will, have such an effect; for we see around us millions of times how readily people become accustomed to observing the necessary rules of social intercourse if there is no exploitation, if there is nothing that causes indignation, nothing that calls forth protest and revolt or evokes the necessity for *suppression*.

Thus in capitalist society we have a democracy that is curtailed, wretched, false; a democracy only for the rich, for the minority. The dictatorship of the proletariat, the period of transition to Communism, will for the first time create democracy for the people, for the majority, in addition to the necessary suppression of the minority—the exploiters. Communism alone is capable of giving really complete democracy, and the more complete it is the more quickly will it become unnecessary and wither away of itself.

In other words: under capitalism we have a state in the proper sense of the word, that is, a special machine for the suppression of one class by another, and of the majority by the minority at that. Naturally, the successful discharge of such a task as the systematic suppression of the exploited majority by the exploiting minority calls for the greatest ferocity and savagery in the work of suppression, it calls for seas of blood through which mankind has to wade in slavery, serfdom and wage labour.

Furthermore, during the *transition* from capitalism to Communism suppression is *still* necessary; but it is now the suppression of the exploiting minority by the exploited majority. A special apparatus, a special machine for suppression, the "state," is *still* necessary, but this is now a transitory state; it is no longer a state in the proper sense; for the suppression of the minority of exploiters by the majority of the wage-slaves *of yesterday* is comparatively so easy, simple and natural a task that it will entail far less bloodshed than the suppression of the risings of slaves, serfs or wage labourers, and it will cost mankind far less. And it is compatible with the extension of democracy to such an overwhelming majority of the population that the need for a *special machine* of suppression will begin to disappear. The exploiters are naturally unable to suppress the people without a very complex machine for performing this task; but *the people* can suppress the exploiters even with a very simple "machine," almost without a "machine,"

without a special apparatus, by the simple *organization of the armed masses* (such as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, we may remark, running ahead a little).

Finally, only Communism makes the state absolutely unnecessary, for there is *nobody* to be suppressed—"nobody" in the sense of a *class*, in the sense of a systematic struggle against a definite section of the population. We are not utopians, and we do not in the least deny the possibility and inevitability of excesses on the part of *individual persons*, or the need to suppress *such* excesses. But, in the first place, no special machine, no special apparatus of repression is needed for this; this will be done by the armed people itself, as simply and as readily as any crowd of civilized people, even in modern society, parts two people who are fighting, or interferes to prevent a woman from being assaulted. And, secondly, we know that the fundamental social cause of excesses, which consist of violating the rules of social intercourse, is the exploitation of the masses, their want and their poverty. With the removal of this chief cause, excesses will inevitably begin to "*wi her away*." We do not know how quickly and in what order, but we know that they will wither away. With their withering away the state *will also wi her away*.

Without indulging in utopias, Marx defined more fully what can be defined *now* regarding this future, namely, the difference between the lower and higher phases (degrees, stages) of Communist society.

3. *The First Phase of Communist Society*

In the *Cri'ique of the Gotha Program*, Marx goes into some detail to disprove Lassalle's idea that under Socialism the worker will receive the "undiminished" or "whole proceeds of his labour." Marx shows that from the whole of the social labour of society it is necessary to deduct a reserve fund, a fund for the expansion of production, for the replacement of "used up" machinery, and so on; then, also, from the means of consumption must be deducted a fund for the costs of administration, for schools, hospitals, homes for the aged, and so on.

Instead of Lassalle's hazy, obscure, general phrase ("the whole proceeds of his labour to the worker") Marx makes a sober estimate of exactly how Socialist society will have to manage its affairs. Marx proceeds to make a *concrete* analysis of the conditions of life of a society in which there will be no capitalism, and says:

> "What we have to deal with here [in analysing the program of the workers' party] is a Communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges."

And it is this Communist society—a society which has just come into the world out of the womb of capitalism and which, in every respect, bears the birthmarks of the old society—*that Marx terms the "first,"* or lower phase of Communist society.

The means of production are no longer the private property of individuals The means of production belong to the whole of society Every member of society, performing a certain part of the socially necessary labour, receives a certificate from society to the effect that he has done such and such an amount of work And with this certificate he draws from the social stock of means of consumption a corresponding quantity of products After deduction of the amount of labour which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given it

"Equality" apparently reigns supreme

But when Lassalle, having such a social order in view (usually called Socialism, but termed by Marx the first phase of Communism), speaks of this as "equitable distribution," and says that this is "the equal right" of all members of society" to "equal proceeds of labour," he is mistaken and Marx exposes his error

"Equal right," says Marx, we indeed have here, but it is *still* a 'bourgeois right," which, like every right, *presupposes inequality* Every right is an application of an *equal* standard to *different* people who in fact are not alike, are not equal to one another, that is why "equal right" is really a violation of equality and an injustice As a matter of fact, every man, having performed as much social labour as another, receives an equal share of the social product (after the above mentioned deductions)

But people are not alike one is strong, another is weak, one is married, another is not, one has more children another has less, and so on And the conclusion Marx draws is

> " With an equal output, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on To avoid all these defects, right, instead of being equal, would have to be unequal "

Hence, the first phase of Communism cannot yet produce justice and equality, differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still exist, but the *exploitation* of man by man will have become impossible, because it will be impossible to seize the *means of production*, the factories, machines land, etc , as private property In smashing Lassalle's petty bourgeois, confused phrases about "equality" and "justice" *in general*, Marx shows the *course of development* of Communist society, which at first is *compelled* to abolish *only* the "injustice" of the means of production having been seized by private individuals, and which *cannot* at once abolish the other injustice, which consists in the distribution of articles of consumption "according to the amount of labour performed" (and not according to needs)

The vulgar economists, including the bourgeois professors and also "our" Tugan-Baranovsky, constantly reproach the Socialists with forgetting the inequality of people and with "dreaming" of abolishing this inequality. Such a reproach, as we see, only proves the extreme ignorance of Messieurs the Bourgeois Ideologists.

Marx not only scrupulously takes into account the inevitable inequality of men but he also takes into account the fact that the mere conversion of the means of production into the common property of the whole of society (usually called "Socialism") *does not remove* the defects of distribution and the inequality of "bourgeois right" which *continue to prevail* as long as products are divided "according to the amount of labour performed." Continuing, Marx says:

> "But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of Communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and the cultural development thereby determined."

And so, in the first phase of Communist society (usually called Socialism) "bourgeois right" is *not* abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic transformation so far attained, *i.e.*, only in respect of the means of production. "Bourgeois right" recognizes them as the private property of individuals. Socialism converts them into *common* property. *To that extent*—and to that extent alone—"bourgeois right" disappears.

However, it continues to exist as far as its other part is concerned; it continues to exist in the capacity of regulator (determining factor) in the distribution of products and the allotment of labour among the members of society. The Socialist principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat," is *already* realized; the other Socialist principle: "An equal amount of products for an equal amount of labour," is also *already* realized. But this is not yet Communism, and it does not yet abolish "bourgeois right," which gives to unequal individuals, in return for an unequal (actually unequal) amount of labour, an equal amount of products.

This is a "defect," says Marx, but it is unavoidable in the first phase of Communism; for if we are not to indulge in utopianism, we must not think that having overthrown capitalism people will at once learn to work for society *without any standard of right*; and indeed the abolition of capitalism *does not immediately* create the economic premises for *such* a change.

And there is as yet no other standard than that of "bourgeois right." To this extent, therefore, there is still need for a state, which, while safeguarding the public ownership of the means of production would safeguard equality of labour and equality in the distribution of products.

The state withers away in so far as there are no longer any capitalists, any classes, and, consequently, no *class* can be *suppressed*.

But the state has not yet completely withered away, since there still remains the safeguarding of "bourgeois right," which *sanctifies actual inequality* For the complete withering away of the state complete Communism is necessary

4 *The Higher Phase of Communist Society*

Marx continues

> "In a higher phase of Communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished, after labour, from a mere means of life, has itself become the prime necessity of life, after the productive forces have also increased with the all round development of the individual, and all the springs of co operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banners From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"

Only now can we appreciate to the full the correctness of Engels' remarks in which he mercilessly ridiculed the absurdity of combining the words "freedom" and "state" While the state exists there is no freedom When there will be freedom, there will be no state

The economic basis for the complete withering away of the state is such a high stage of development of Communism that the antithesis between mental and physical labour disappears, that is to say, when one of the principal sources of modern *social* inequality disappears—a source, moreover, which cannot be removed immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere *expropriation* of the capitalists

This expropriation will *facilitate* an enormous development of productive forces And seeing how capitalism is already *retarding this development* to an incredible degree, seeing how much progress could be achieved even on the basis of the present level of modern technique, we are entitled to say with the fullest confidence that the expropriation of the capitalists will inevitably result in an enormous development of the productive forces of human society But how rapidly this development will proceed, how soon it will reach the point of breaking away from the division of labour, of removing the antithesis between mental and physical labour, or transforming labour into "the prime necessity of life"—we do not and *cannot know*

That is why we are entitled to speak only of the inevitable withering away of the state, emphasizing the protracted nature of this process and its dependence upon the rapidity of development of the *higher phase* of Communism, and leaving the question of length of time, or the concrete forms of

the withering away, quite open, because there is *no* material for an answer to these questions.

The state will be able to wither away completely when society applies the rule: "From each according to his abillity, to each according to his needs," *i.e.*, when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labour is so productive that they will voluntarily work *according to their ability*. "The narrow horizon of bourgeois right," which compels one to calculate with the stringency of a Shylock whether one has not worked half an hour more than another, whether one is not getting less pay than another—this narrow horizon will then be left behind. There will then be no need for society to regulate the quantity of products to be distributed to each; each will take freely "according to his needs."

From the bourgeois point of view, it is easy to declare that such a social order is "a pure utopia" and to sneer at the Socialists for promising everyone the right to receive from society, without any control of the labour of the individual citizen, any quantity of truffles, automobiles, pianos, etc. Even now, most bourgeois "savants" confine themselves to sneering in this way, thereby displaying at once their ignorance and their mercenary defence of capitalism.

Ignorance—for it has never entered the head of any Socialist to "promise" that the higher phase of the development of Communism will arrive; but the great Socialists, in *foreseeing* its arrival, presuppose not the present productivity of labour *and not the present* ordinary run of people, who, like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky's stories,* are capable of damaging the stocks of social wealth "just for fun" and of demanding the impossible.

Until the "higher" phase of Communism arrives, the Socialists demand the *strictest* control by society *and by the state* of the measure of labour and the measure of consumption; but this control must *start* with the expropriation of the capitalists, with the establishment of workers' control over the capitalists, and must be carried out not by a state of bureaucrats, but by a state of *armed workers*.

The mercenary defence of capitalism by the bourgeois ideologists (and their hangers-on, like Messrs. Tsereteli, Chernov and Co.) lies in their *substituting* controversies and discussions about the distant future for the essential and imperative questions of *present-day* policy, *viz.*, the expropriation of the capitalists, the conversion of *all* citizens into workers and employees of *one* huge "syndicate"—the whole state—and the complete subordination of the whole of the work of this syndicate to the really democratic state, *the state of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies*.

* The reference here is to N. Pomyalovsky's *Sketches of Seminary Life* in which this Russian novelist exposed the absurd system of education and brutal customs which held sway in the Russian theological schools in the fifties and sixties of the past century.—*Ed.*

In reality, when a learned professor, and following him the philistine, and following him Messrs Tsereteli and Chernov, talk of the unreasonable utopias, of the demagogic promises of the Bolsheviks, of the impossibility of "introducing" Socialism, it is the higher stage or phase of Communism they have in mind, which no one has ever promised or even thought to "introduce," because generally speaking it cannot be "introduced"

And this brings us to the question of the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism, which Engels touched on in his above quoted argument about the incorrectness of the name "Social Democrat" The political difference between the first, or lower, and the higher phase of Communism will in time, probably, be tremendous, but it would be ridiculous to take cognisance of this difference now, under capitalism, and only isolated anarchists, perhaps, could invest it with primary importance (if there are still people among the anarchists who have learned nothing from the "Plekhanovite" conversion of the Kropotkins, the Graveses, the Cornelisens and other "leading lights" of anarchism into social chauvinists or "anarcho trenchists," as Gay, one of the few anarchists who has still preserved a sense of honour and a conscience, has expressed it)

But the scientific difference between Socialism and Communism is clear What is usually called Socialism was termed by Marx the "first" or lower phase of Communist society In so far as the means of production become *common* property, the word "Communism" is also applicable here, providing we do not forget that it is *not* complete Communism The great significance of Marx s explanations is that here, too, he consistently applies materialist dialectics, the doctrine of development, and regards Communism as something which develops *out of* capitalism Instead of scholastically invented, "concocted" definitions and fruitless disputes about words (what is Socialism? what is Communism?), Marx gives an analysis of what may be called the stages in the economic ripeness of Communism

In its first phase, or first stage, Communism *cannot* as yet be fully ripe economically and entirely free from traditions and traces of capitalism Hence the interesting phenomenon that Communism in its first phase retains "the narrow horizon of *bourgeois* right " Of course, bourgeois right in regard to the distribution of articles of *consumption* inevitably presupposes the existence of the *bourgeois state*, for right is nothing without an apparatus capable of *enforcing* the observance of the standards of right

Consequently, not only bourgeois right, but even the bourgeois state for a certain time remains under Communism, without the bourgeoisie!

This may sound like a paradox or simply a dialectical puzzle, of which Marxism is often accused by people who do not take the slightest trouble to study its extraordinarily profound content

But as a matter of fact, remnants of the old surviving in the new confront us in life at every step, both in nature and in society And Marx did not arbitrarily insert a scrap of "bourgeois" right into Communism, but

indicated what is economically and politically inevitable in a society emerging *from the womb* of capitalism.

Democracy is of great importance to the working class in its struggle for emancipation from the capitalists. But democracy is by no means a boundary that must not be overstepped; it is only one of the stages on the road from feudalism to capitalism, and from capitalism to Communism,

Democracy means equality. The great significance of the proletariat's struggle for equality and the significance of equality as a slogan will be clear if we correctly interpret it as meaning the abolition of *classes*. But democracy means only *formal* equality. And as soon as equality is obtained for all members of society *in relation to* the ownership of the means of production, that is, equality of labour and equality of wages, humanity will inevitably be confronted with the question of going beyond formal equality to real equality, *i.e.*, to applying the rule, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." By what stages, by what practical measures humanity will proceed to this higher aim—we do not and cannot know. But it is important to realize how infinitely mendacious is the ordinary bourgeois conception of Socialism as something lifeless, petrified, fixed once for all, whereas in reality *only* under Socialism will a rapid, genuine, really mass forward movement, embracing first the *majority* and then the whole of the population, commence in all spheres of social and personal life.

Democracy is a form of state, one of its varieties. Consequently, it, like every state, on the one hand represents the organized, systematic application of force against persons; but on the other hand it signifies the formal recognition of the equality of all citizens, the equal right of all to determine the structure and administration of the state. This, in turn, is connected with the fact that, at a certain stage in the development of democracy, it first rallies the proletariat as the revolutionary class against capitalism, and enables it to crush, smash to atoms, wipe off the face of the earth the bourgeois, even the republican bourgeois, state machine, the standing army, the police and bureaucracy, and to substitute for them a *more* democratic state machine, but a state machine nevertheless, in the shape of the armed masses of workers who are being transformed into a universal people's militia.

Here "quantity is transformed into quality": *such* a degree of democracy implies overstepping the boundaries of bourgeois society, the beginning of its Socialist reconstruction. If, indeed, *all* take part in the administration of the state, capitalism cannot retain its hold. And the development of capitalism, in turn, itself creates the *premises* that really *enable* "all" to take part in the administration of the state. Some of the premises are: universal literacy, which is already achieved in a number of the most advanced capitalist countries, then the "training and disciplining" of millions of workers by the huge, complex, socialized apparatus of the post-office, railways, big factories, large-scale commerce, banking, etc., etc.

Given these *economic* premises it is quite possible, after the overthrow of the capitalists and bureaucrats, to proceed immediately, overnight, to supersede them in the *control* of production and distribution, in the work of *keeping account* of labour and products by the armed workers, by the whole of the armed population (The question of control and accounting must not be confused with the question of the scientifically trained staff of engineers, agronomists and so on These gentlemen are working today and obey the capitalists, they will work even better to morrow and obey the armed workers)

Accounting and control—that is the *main* thing required for the "setting up" and correct functioning of the *first phase* of Communist society *All* citizens are transformed into the salaried employees of the state, which consists of the armed workers *All* citizens become employees and workers of a *single* national state "syndicate" All that is required is that they should work equally—do their proper share of work—and get paid equally. The accounting and control necessary for this have been *simplified* by capitalism to an extreme and reduced to the extraordinarily simple operations—which any literate person can perform—of checking and recording, knowledge of the four rules of arithmetic, and issuing receipts *

When the *majority* of the people begin independently and everywhere to keep such accounts and maintain such control over the capitalists (now converted into employees) and over the intellectual gentry who preserve their capitalist habits, this control will really become universal, general, national, and there will be no way of getting away from it, there will be "nowhere to go"

The whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory, with equality of labour and equality of pay

But this "factory" discipline, which the proletariat will extend to the whole of society after the defeat of the capitalists and the overthrow of the exploiters, is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal It is but a necessary *step* for the purpose of thoroughly purging society of all the hideousness and foulness of capitalist exploitation, *and for further* progress

From the moment all members of society, or even only the vast majority, have learned to administer the state *themselves*, have taken this business into their own hands, have "set up" control over the insignificant minority of capitalists, over the gentry who wish to preserve their capitalist habits, and over the workers who have been profoundly corrupted by capitalism—from this moment the need for government begins to disappear altogether The more complete democracy, the nearer the moment approaches when it becomes unnecessary The more democratic the 'state" which consists of

* When most of the functions of the state are reduced to this accounting and ...emselves, it will cease to be a 'political state" and the ... political character and be transformed into simple ... above, Chapter IV, § 2, Engels' "Controversy

the armed workers, and which is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word," the more rapidly does *every form* of the state begin to wither away.

For when *all* have learned to administer and actually do administer social production independently, independently keep accounts and exercise control over the idlers, the gentlefolk, the swindlers and similar "guardians of capitalist traditions," the escape from this national accounting and control will inevitably become so incredibly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (for the armed workers are practical men and not sentimental intellectuals, and they will scarcely allow anyone to trifle with them), that very soon the *necessity* of observing the simple, fundamental rules of human intercourse will become a *habit*.

And then the door will be wide open for the transition from the first phase of Communist society to its higher phase, and with it to the complete withering away of the state.*

CHAPTER VI

THE VULGARIZATION OF MARXISM BY THE OPPORTUNISTS

The question of the relation of the state to the social revolution, and of the social revolution to the state, like the question of revolution generally, troubled the prominent theoreticians and publicists of the Second International (1889-1914) very little. But the most characteristic thing in the process of the gradual growth of opportunism which led to the collapse of the Second International in 1914, is the fact that even when these people actually were confronted with this question they *tried to evade it* or else failed to notice it.

* In his report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in March 1939, J. Stalin, touching on the doctrine of Marx and Engels on the state, said: "It is sometimes asked ... 'The exploiting classes have already been abolished in our country; Socialism has been built in the main; we are advancing towards Communism. Now, the Marxist doctrine of the state says that there is to be no state under Communism.—Why then do we not help our Socialist state to die away? Is it not time we relegated the state to the museum of antiquities?'

"These questions show that those who ask them have conscientiously memorized certain propositions contained in the doctrine of Marx and Engels about the state. But they also show that these comrades have failed to understand the essential meaning of this doctrine; that they have failed to realize in what historical conditions the various propositions of this doctrine were elaborated; and, what is more, that they do not understand present-day international conditions, have overlooked the capitalist encirclement and the dangers it entails for the Socialist country....

"We are going ahead, towards Communism. Will our state remain in the period of Communism also?

In general, it may be said that *evasiveness* on the question of the relation of the proletarian revolution to the state—an evasiveness which was to the advantage of opportunism and fostered it—resulted in the *distortion* of Marxism and in its complete vulgarization

To characterize this lamentable process, if only briefly, we shall take the most prominent theoreticians of Marxism Plekhanov and Kautsky.

1. *Plekhanov's Controversy with the Anarchists*

Plekhanov wrote a special pamphlet on the relation of anarchism to Socialism, entitled *Anarchism and Socialism,* published in German in 1894

Plekhanov managed somehow to treat this subject while completely ignoring the most vital, topical, and politically most essential point in the struggle against anarchism, *viz* , the relation of the revolution to the state, and the question of the state in general! His pamphlet divides into two parts the one is historical and literary, and contains valuable material on the history of the ideas of Stirner Proudhon and others, the other is philistine, and contains a clumsy dissertation on the theme that an anarchist cannot be distinguished from a bandit

An amusing combination of subjects and most characteristic of Plekhanov's whole activity on the eve of the revolution and during the revolutionary period in Russia Indeed, in the years 1905 to 1917, Plekhanov revealed himself as a semi doctrinaire and semi philistine who, in politics, followed in the wake of the bourgeoisie

We have seen how, in their controversy with the anarchists, Marx and Engels very thoroughly explained their views on the relation of revolution to the state In 1891, in his foreword to Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program,* Engels wrote that "we"—that is, Engels and Marx—"were at that time, hardly two years after the Hague Congress of the [First] International, engaged in the most violent struggle against Bakunin and his anarchists "

The anarchists had tried to claim the Paris Commune as their "own," so to say, as a corroboration of their doctrine, and they utterly failed to understand its lessons and Marx's analysis of these lessons Anarchism has failed to give anything even approaching a true solution of the concrete political problems, *viz* , must the old state machine be *smashed?* and *what* should supersede it?

---

* Yes, it will, unless the capitalist encirclement is liquidated, and unless the danger of foreign military attack has disappeared Naturally, of course the forms of our state will again change in conformity with the change in the situation at home and abroad

* No, it will not remain and will atrophy if the capitalist encirclement is liquidated and a Socialist encirclement takes its place " (J Stalin *Problems of Leninism,* Eng ed , 1943, pp 656 57 and 662 —*Ed*)

But to speak of "anarchism and Socialism" and completely evade the question of the state, *to fail to take note* of the whole development of Marxism before and after the Commune, inevitably meant slipping into opportunism. For the very thing opportunism needs is that the two questions just mentioned should *not* be raised at all. That *in itself* is a victory for opportunism.

2. *Kautsky's Controversy with the Opportunists*

Undoubtedly an immeasurably larger number of Kautsky's works have been translated into Russian than into any other language. It is not without reason that German Social-Democrats sometimes say in jest that Kautsky is read more in Russia than in Germany (we may say, parenthetically, that there is deeper historical significance in this jest than those who first made it suspected; for the Russian workers, by creating in 1905 an extraordinarily strong and unprecedented demand for the best works of the best Social-Democratic literature in the world, and by receiving translations and editions of these works in quantities unheard of in other countries transplanted, so to speak, at an accelerated pace the enormous experience of a neighbouring, more advanced country to the young soil of our proletarian movement).

Besides his popularization of Marxism, Kautsky is particularly known in our country for his controversy with the opportunists, and with Bernstein at their head. But one fact is almost unknown, one which cannot be overlooked if we are to set ourselves the task of investigating how it was that Kautsky drifted into the unbelievably disgraceful morass of confusion and defence of social-chauvinism during the great crisis of 1914-15. This fact is the following: shortly before he came out against the prominent representatives of opportunism in France (Millerand and Jaurès) and in Germany (Bernstein), Kautsky betrayed very considerable vacillation. The Marxian journal, *Zarya* (*Dawn*), which was published in Stuttgart in 1901-02, and advocated revolutionary proletarian views, was forced to *enter into controversy* with Kautsky, to characterize as "elastic" the half-hearted, evasive and conciliatory resolution on the opportunists that he proposed at the International Socialist Congress in Paris in 1900.* Kautsky's letters published in Germany reveal no less hesitancy on his part before he took the field against Bernstein.

Of immeasurably greater significance, however, is the fact that, in his controversy with the opportunists, in his formulation of the question and his method of treating it, we can observe, now that we are investigating the *history* of his latest betrayal of Marxism, his systematic gravitation towards opportunism precisely on the question of the state.

---

* Kautsky proposed a resolution which was adopted by the Congress permitting, with reservations, true, Socialists to join bourgeois governments.—*Ed.*

Let us take Kautsky's first important work against opportunism, his *Bernstein and the Social-Democratic Program.* Kautsky refutes Bernstein in detail, but the characteristic thing about it is the following: Bernstein, in his *Premises of Socialism*, of Herostratean fame, accuses Marxism of "*Blanquism*" (an accusation since repeated thousands of times by the opportunists and liberal bourgeois in Russia against the representatives of revolutionary Marxism, the Bolsheviks). In this connection Bernstein dwells particularly on Marx's *The Civil War in France,* and tries, quite unsuccessfully, as we have seen, to identify Marx's views on the lessons of the Commune, with those of Proudhon. Bernstein pays particular attention to Marx's conclusion, which the latter emphasized in his 1872 preface to *The Communist Manifesto, viz.*, that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes."

This utterance "pleased" Bernstein so much that he repeats it no less than three times in his book—interpreting it in the most distorted opportunist sense.

As we have seen, Marx meant that the working class must *smash, break, shatter* (*Sprengung*—explode, the expression used by Engels) the whole state machine. But according to Bernstein it would appear as though Marx in these words warned the working class *against* excessive revolutionary zeal when seizing power.

A cruder and more hideous distortion of Marx's idea cannot be imagined.

How, then, did Kautsky proceed in his detailed refutation of Bernsteinism?

He refrained from probing the depths of the distortion of Marxism by opportunism on this point. He cited the above-quoted passage from Engels' introduction to Marx's *Civil War* and said that according to Marx the working class cannot *simply* lay hold of the *ready-made* state machine, but *can lay hold of it, generally speaking*—and that was all. Not a word does Kautsky utter about the fact that Bernstein attributed to Marx the *very opposite* of Marx's real views, about the fact that the task of the proletarian revolution which Marx advanced in 1852 was to "smash" the state machine.

The result was that the most essential difference between Marxism and opportunism on the tasks of the proletarian revolution was glossed over by Kautsky!

> "We can safely leave the solution of the problem of the proletarian dictatorship to the future," said Kautsky, writing "*against*" Bernstein. (p. 172, German edition.)

This is not an argument *against* Bernstein, but, in essence, a *concession* to him, a surrender to opportunism; for at present the opportunists ask nothing better than to "safely leave to the future" all fundamental questions of the tasks of the proletarian revolution.

From 1852 to 1891, for forty years, Marx and Engels taught the proletariat that it must smash the state machine. Yet, in 1899, Kautsky, confronted on this point with the complete betrayal of Marxism by the opportunists fraudulently *substituted* for the question of whether it was necessary to smash this machine the question of the concrete forms in which it was to be smashed, and then tried to take refuge behind the "indisputable" (and barren) philistine truth that concrete forms cannot be known in advance!!

A gulf separates Marx and Kautsky in their respective attitudes towards the task of the proletarian party in preparing the working class for revolution.

We shall take the next, more mature, work by Kautsky, which also, to a large extent, was written to refute opportunist errors. This is his pamphlet, *The Social Revolution*. In this pamphlet the author chose as his special theme the question of "the proletarian revolution" and "the proletarian regime." In it he gave much that was exceedingly valuable, but he just *evaded* the question of the state. Throughout the pamphlet the author speaks of the conquest of state power—and nothing else; that is, he chooses a formula which makes a concession to the opportunists, inasmuch as it *admits* the possibility of power being seized *without* destroying the state machine. The very thing which Marx, in 1872, declared to be "obsolete" in the program of *The Communist Manifesto is revived* by Kautsky in 1902!

A special section in the pamphlet is devoted to "the forms and weapon of the social revolution." Here Kautsky speaks of the political mass strike, of civil war, and of the "instruments of force of the modern large state, such as the bureaucracy and the army"; but not a word does he say about what the Commune had already taught the workers. Evidently, Engels' warning, particularly to the German Socialists, against "superstitious reverence" for the state was not an idle one.

Kautsky explains the matter by stating that the victorious proletariat "will carry out the democratic program," and he goes on to formulate its clauses. But not a word does he utter about the new things the year 1871 taught us concerning the supersession of bourgeois democracy by proletarian democracy. Kautsky disposes of the question by "solid" banalities such as:

> "Still, it goes without saying that we shall not achieve power under present conditions. Revolution itself presupposes a long and deep-going struggle, which will change our present political and social structure."

Undoubtedly, this "goes without saying," just as does the truth that horses eat oats, or that the Volga flows into the Caspian Sea. Only it is a pity that an empty and bombastic phrase about "deep-going" struggle is used as a means of *evading* a question of vital interest to the revolutionary

proletariat, namely, *what* expresses the "deep going" nature of *its* revolution in relation to the state, in relation to democracy, as distinct from previous, non proletarian revolutions

By evading this question, Kautsky *really* makes a concession to opportunism on this most essential point, although *in words* he declares terrible war against it and emphasizes the importance of the "idea of revolution" (how much is this "idea" worth when one is afraid to teach the workers the concrete lessons of revolution?), or says, 'revolutionary idealism before everything else," or declares that the English workers are now "little more than petty bourgeois "

> "The most varied forms of enterprises—bureaucratic [??], trade union, co operative, private . can exist side by side in Socialist society," Kautsky writes " There are enterprises which cannot do without a bureaucratic [??] organization, for example the railways Here the democratic organization might take the following form the workers elect delegates who form a sort of parliament, which draws up the working regulations and supervises the management of the bureaucratic apparatus The management of other enterprises may be transferred to the trade unions, and still others may become co operative enterprises" (pp 148 and 115 of the Russian translation published in Geneva in 1903)

This reasoning is erroneous, and is a step backward compared with what Marx and Engels explained in the 'seventies, using the lessons of the Commune as an example

As far as the alleged need for a "bureaucratic" organization is concerned there is no difference whatever between railways and any other enterprise in large scale machine industry, any factory, large store, or large scale capitalist agricultural enterprise The technique of all such enterprises *requires the strictest discipline, the greatest accuracy* on the part of everyone in carrying out his allotted task, for otherwise the whole enterprise would fail to work, or machinery or goods be damaged In all such enterprises the workers will, of course, 'elect delegates who will form *a sort of parliament* "

But the whole point is that this "sort of parliament" will *n o t* be a parliament like the bourgeois parliamentary institutions The whole point is that this 'sort of parliament" will *n o t* merely "draw up the working regulations and supervise *the management of the bureaucratic apparatus,*" as Kautsky whose ideas do not go beyond the framework of bourgeois parliamentarism, imagines In Socialist society the "sort of parliament" consisting of workers' deputies will, of course, "draw up the working regulations and superintend the management" of the 'apparatus"—*b u t this* apparatus will *n o t* be "bureaucratic " The workers, having conquered political power, will smash the old bureaucratic apparatus, they will shatter it to its very foundations, they will not leave a single stone of it stand

ing; and they will put in its place a new one, consisting of workers and office employees, *against* whose transformation into bureaucrats the measures will at once be taken which were specified in detail by Marx and Engels: 1) not only election, but also recall at any time; 2) payment not exceeding that of a workman; 3) immediate introduction of control and supervision by *all*, so that *all* shall become "bureaucrats" for a time and, therefore, *nobody* may become a "bureaucrat."

Kautsky has not reflected at all on Marx's words: "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time."

Kautsky has not in the least understood the difference between bourgeois parliamentarism, which combines democracy (*not for the people*) with bureaucracy (*against the people*), and proletarian democracy, which will take immediate steps to cut bureaucracy down to the roots, and which will be able to carry out these measures to the end, to the complete abolition of bureaucracy, to the introduction of complete democracy for the people.

Kautsky here betrays the old "superstitious reverence" for the state, and "superstitious belief" in bureaucracy.

We shall now pass on to the last and best of Kautsky's works against the opportunists, his pamphlet *The Road to Power* (which, I believe, has not been translated into Russian, for it was published at the time when the severest reaction reigned here, in 1909). This pamphlet marks a considerable step forward, inasmuch as it does not deal with the revolutionary program in general, as in the pamphlet of 1899 against Bernstein, nor with the tasks of the social revolution irrespective of the time of its occurrence, as in the pamphlet, *The Social Revolution*, 1902; it deals with the concrete conditions which compel us to recognize that the "revolutionary era" is *approaching*.

The author definitely calls attention to the intensification of class antagonisms in general and to imperialism, which plays a particularly important part in this connection. After the "revolutionary period of 1789-1871" in Western Europe, he says, a similar period began in the East in 1905. A world war is approaching with menacing rapidity. "The proletariat can no longer talk of premature revolution." "We have entered a revolutionary period." The "revolutionary era is beginning."

These declarations are perfectly clear. This pamphlet of Kautsky's should serve as a measure of comparison between what German Social-Democracy *promised to be* before the imperialist war and the depth of degradation to which it—Kautsky included—fell when the war broke out. "The present situation," Kautsky wrote, in the pamphlet we are examining, "brings the danger that we (*i.e.*, German Social-Democracy) may easily appear to be more moderate than we are." Actually, it turned out that the German Social-Democratic Party was much more moderate and opportunist than it appeared to be!

The more characteristic is it, therefore, that although he definitely declared that the revolutionary era had already begun, Kautsky, in the pamphlet which he himself said was devoted precisely to an analysis of the "*political* revolution," again completely evaded the question of the state.

These evasions of the question, these omissions and equivocations, inevitably led in their sum total to that complete surrender to opportunism with which we shall now have to deal.

German Social Democracy, in the person of Kautsky, seems to have declared. I keep *to revolutionary views (1899), I recognize, in particular,* the inevitability of the social revolution of the proletariat (1902), I recognize the approach of a new revolutionary era (1909). Still, now that the question of the tasks of the proletarian revolution in relation to the state is being raised, I go back on what Marx said as long ago as 1852 (1912).

It was precisely in this direct form that the question was put in Kautsky's controversy with Pannekoek.

3. *Kautsky's Controversy with Pannekoek*

In opposing Kautsky, Pannekoek came out as one of the representatives of the "Left radical" trend which counted in its ranks Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Radek and others. Advocating revolutionary tactics, they were united in the conviction that Kautsky was going over to the position of the "centre," which wavered without principles between Marxism and opportunism The correctness of this view was fully confirmed by the war, when this "centre" (wrongly called Marxist) trend, or Kautskyism, revealed itself in all its repulsive wretchedness.

In an article touching on the question of the state, entitled "Mass Action and Revolution" (*Neue Zeit*, *1912*, Vol XXX, 2), Pannekoek characterized Kautsky's position as an attitude of "passive radicalism," as "a theory of inactive waiting " "Kautsky loses sight of the process of revolution," said Pannekoek (p 616)

In presenting the problem in this way, Pannekoek approached the subject which interests us, namely, the tasks of the proletarian revolution in relation to the state.

> "The struggle of the proletariat," he wrote, "is not merely a struggle against the bourgeoisie *for* state power, but a struggle *against* state power. .. The content of the proletarian revolution is the destruction and dissolution [*Auflosung*] of the instruments of power of the state with the aid of the instruments of power of the proletariat. . . . The struggle will cease only when the organization of the state is utterly destroyed The organization of the majority will then

> have demonstrated its superiority by having destroyed the organization of the ruling minority" (p. 548).

The formulation in which Pannekoek presented his ideas suffers from serious defects, but its meaning is sufficiently clear; and it is interesting to note *how* Kautsky combated it.

> "Up to now," he wrote, "the difference between the Social-Democrats and the anarchists has been that the former wished to conquer state power while the latter wished to destroy it. Pannekoek wants to do both" (p. 724).

Although Pannekoek's exposition lacks precision and concreteness—not to speak of other defects in his article which have no bearing on the present subject—Kautsky seized on the *principle* of the issue indicated by Pannekoek; and *on this fundamental* question of *principle* Kautsky abandoned the Marxian position entirely and completely went over to opportunism. His definition of the difference between the Social-Democrats and the anarchists is absolutely wrong, and he utterly vulgarized and distorted Marxism.

The difference between the Marxists and the anarchists is this: 1) the former, while aiming at the complete abolition of the state, recognize that this aim can only be achieved after classes have been abolished by the Socialist revolution, as the result of the establishment of Socialism, which leads to the withering away of the state; the latter want to abolish the state completely overnight, failing to understand the conditions under which the state can be abolished. 2) The former recognize that after the proletariat has conquered political power it must utterly destroy the old state machine and substitute for it a new one consisting of the organization of the armed workers, after the type of the Commune; the latter, while insisting on the destruction of the state machine, have absolutely no clear idea of *what* the proletariat will put in its place and *how* it will use its revolutionary power; the anarchists even deny that the revolutionary proletariat should utilize the state power, that is, they deny its revolutionary dictatorship. 3) The former demand that the proletariat be prepared for revolution by utilizing the present state; the anarchists reject this.

In this controversy it is Pannekoek and not Kautsky who represents Marxism, for it was Marx who taught that the proletariat cannot simply conquer state power in the sense that the old state apparatus passes into new hands, but must smash, break this apparatus and substitute a new one for it.

Kautsky abandons Marxism for the camp of the opportunists, for this destruction of the state machine, which is utterly unacceptable to the opportunists, completely disappears from his argument, and he leaves a loophole which enables them to interpret "conquest" as simply meaning the winning of a majority.

To cover up his distortion of Marxism, Kautsky behaves like a pedant: he juggles with "quotations" from Marx himself. In 1850 Marx wrote that "a decisive centralization of power in the hands of the state" was necessary, and Kautsky triumphantly asks: does Pannekoek want to destroy "centralism"?

This is simply a trick, similar to Bernstein's identification of the views of Marxism and Proudhonism on the subject of federalism *versus* centralism.

Kautsky's "quotation" is neither here nor there. The new state machine permits of centralism as much as the old. If the workers voluntarily unite their armed forces, this will be centralism, but this centralism will be based on the "complete destruction" of the centralized state apparatus—the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy. Kautsky acts exactly like a swindler when he ignores the perfectly well known arguments of Marx and Engels on the Commune and plucks out a quotation which has nothing to do with the case.

> "Perhaps Pannekoek," Kautsky continues, "wants to abolish the state functions of the officials? But we cannot do without officials in the party and the trade unions, much less in the state administration. Our program does not demand the abolition of state officials, but that they be elected by the people. . . . We are not discussing here the form the administrative apparatus of the 'future state' will assume, but whether our political struggle will dissolve [*auflost*] the state power *before we have captured it* [Kautsky's italics]. Which Ministry and its officials could be abolished?" Then follows an enumeration of the Ministries of Education, Justice, Finance and War. "No, not one of the present Ministries will be removed by our political struggle against the government. . . . I repeat, in order to avoid misunderstanding we are not discussing here the form the 'future state' will assume as a result of the victory of Social-Democracy, but as to how our opposition will change the present state" (p 725).

This is an obvious trick: Pannekoek raised the question of *revolution*. Both the title of his article and the passages quoted above clearly indicate this. In skipping to the question of "opposition" Kautsky substitutes the opportunist for the revolutionary point of view. What he says is: at present we are an opposition, what we shall be *after* we have captured power, that we shall see *Revolution has vanished!* And that is exactly what the opportunists wanted.

Opposition and the political struggle in general are beside the point, we are concerned with *revolution*. Revolution means that the proletariat will *destroy* the "administrative apparatus" and the *whole* state machine, and substitute for it a new one, consisting of the armed workers. Kautsky reveals a "superstitious reverence" for "Ministries", but why can

they not be superseded, say, by committees of experts, working under sovereign, all-powerful Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies?

The point is not whether the "Ministries" will remain, or whether "committees of experts" or other institutions will be set up; this is quite unimportant. The point is whether the old state machine (connected by thousands of threads with the bourgeoisie and completely saturated with routine and inertia) shall remain, or be *destroyed* and superseded by a *new* one. Revolution must not mean that the new class will command, govern with the aid of the *old* state machine, but that this class will *smash* this machine and command, govern with the aid of a *new* machine. Kautsky slurs over this *fundamental* idea of Marxism, or he has utterly failed to understand it.

His question about officials clearly shows that he does not understand the lessons of the Commune or the teachings of Marx. "We cannot do without officials in the party and the trade unions. . . ."

We cannot do without officials *under capitalism*, under *the rule of the bourgeoisie*. The proletariat is oppressed, the toiling masses are enslaved by capitalism. Under capitalism democracy is restricted, cramped, curtailed, mutilated by all the conditions of wage-slavery, the poverty and misery, of the masses. This is why, and the only reason why, the officials of our political and industrial organizations are corrupted—or, more precisely, tend to be corrupted—by the conditions of capitalism and betray a tendency to become bureaucrats, *i.e.*, privileged persons divorced from the masses and standing *above* the masses.

That is the *essence* of bureaucracy; and until the capitalists have been expropriated and the bourgeoisie overthrown, *even* proletarian officials will inevitably be "bureaucratized" to some extent.

According to Kautsky, since elected officials will remain under Socialism, bureaucrats will remain, bureaucracy will remain! This is exactly where he is wrong. It was precisely the example of the Commune that Marx quoted to show that under Socialism officials will cease to be "bureaucrats"; they will cease to be so *in proportion as*, in addition to the election of officials, the principle of recall at any time is introduced, *and* as salaries are reduced to the level of the wages of the average worker, *and*, too, as parliamentary institutions are superseded by "working bodies, executive and legislative at the same time."

In essence, the whole of Kautsky's argument against Pannekoek, and particularly his wonderful point that we cannot do without officials even in our party and trade union organizations, is merely a repetition of Bernstein's old "arguments" against Marxism in general. In his renegade book, *The Premises of Socialism*, Bernstein combats "primitive" democracy, combats what he calls "doctrinaire democracy": imperative mandates, unpaid officials, impotent central representative bodies, etc. To prove that "primitive democracy" is unsound, Bernstein refers to the experience of the British trade unions, as interpreted by the Webbs. Seventy

years of development "in absolute freedom," he says (p 137, German edition), convinced the trade unions that primitive democracy was useless, and they substituted ordinary democracy for it, *i e*, parliamentarism combined with bureaucracy.

As a matter of fact the trade unions did not develop "in absolute freedom" *but in absolute capitalist slavery*, under which a number of concessions to the prevailing evil, violence, falsehood, exclusion of the poor from the affairs of the "higher" administration, "cannot be avoided " Under Socialism much of the "primitive" democracy *will* inevitably be revived, since, for the first time in the history of civilized society, the *mass* of the population will rise to take an *independent* part, not only in voting and elections, *but also in the everyday administration of affairs* Under Socialism *all* will take part in the work of government in turn and will soon become accustomed to no one governing

Marx's critico analytical genius perceived in the practical measures of the Commune the *turning point*, which the opportunists fear and do not want to recognize because of their cowardice, because they are reluctant to break irrevocably with the bourgeoisie, and which the anarchists do not want to perceive, either through haste or through a general lack of understanding of the conditions of great social changes "We must not even think of destroying the old state machine, how, then, can we hope to do without Ministries and officials?" argues the opportunist who is completely saturated with philistinism, and who, in fact, not only does not believe in revolution, in the creative power of revolution, but actually lives in mortal dread of it (like our Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries)

"We must think *only* of destroying the old state machine, it is no use studying the *concrete* lessons of earlier proletarian revolutions and analysing *what* to put in the place of what has been destroyed, and *how*" argues the anarchist (the best of the anarchists, of course, and not those who, with Messrs Kropotkin and Co , follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie), consequently, the tactics of the anarchist become the tactics of *despair* instead of a ruthlessly bold revolutionary effort to solve concrete problems while taking into account the practical conditions of the mass movement

Marx teaches us to avoid both kinds of error, he teaches us to display boundless audacity in destroying the old state machine entirely, and at the same time he teaches us to put the question concretely the Commune was able in the space of a few weeks to *start* building a *new*, proletarian state machine by introducing such and such measures to secure wider democracy and to uproot bureaucracy Let us learn revolutionary audacity from the Communards, let us see in their practical measures the outline of practically urgent and immediately possible measures, and then, *pursuing this road*, we shall achieve the complete destruction of bureaucracy

The possibility of this destruction is guaranteed by the fact that Socialism will shorten the working day, will raise the *masses* to a new life,

To the right of Kautsky in international Socialism there are trends such as the *Socialist Monthly* in Germany (Legien, David, Kolb and many others, including the Scandinavians Stauning and Branting), the followers of Jaures and Vandervelde in France and Belgium, Turati, Treves and other representatives of the Right wing of the Italian Party, the Fabians and "Independents" (the Independent Labour Party, which, in fact, has always been dependent on the Liberals) in England, and the like All these gentry, who play a great, very often a predominant role in the parliamentary work and the press of the party, openly repudiate the dictatorship of the proletariat and pursue a policy of unconcealed opportunism In the eyes of these gentry, the "dictatorship" of the proletariat "contradicts" democracy!! There is really no essential difference between them and the petty bourgeois democrats.

Taking this circumstance into consideration, we are justified in drawing the conclusion that the Second International, in the case of the overwhelming majority of its official representatives, has completely sunk into opportunism The experience of the Commune has been not only forgotten, but distorted Instead of inculcating in the workers' minds the idea that the time is nearing when they must rise up and smash the old state machine and substitute for it a new one, and in this way make their political rule the foundation for the Socialist reconstruction of society, they have *actually* taught the workers the very opposite and have depicted the "conquest of power" in a way that has left thousands of loopholes for opportunism

The distortion and hushing up of the question of the relation of the proletarian revolution to the state could not but play an immense role at a time when the states, with their military apparatus enlarged as a consequence of imperialist rivalry, had been *transformed into military* monsters which were exterminating millions of people in order to decide whether England *or* Germany—*this* or that finance capital—was to rule the world *

---

* The MS continues as follows

Chapter VII

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS OF 1905 AND 1917

The subject indicated in the title of this chapter is so vast that volumes could and should be written about it In the present pamphlet it will be necessary to confine ourselves naturally, to the most important lessons of experience those touching directly upon the tasks of the proletariat in the revolution in relation to state power (*Here the manuscript breaks off —Ed*)

POSTSCRIPT TO THE FIRST EDITION

This pamphlet was written in August and September 1917. I had already drawn up the plan for the next, the seventh chapter, "The Experience of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and 1917." But except for the title I was unable to write a single line of the chapter; I was "interrupted" by the political crisis—the eve of the October Revolution of 1917. Such an "interruption" can only be welcomed; but the writing of the second part of the pamphlet ("The Experience of the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917") will probably have to be put off for a long time. It is more pleasant and useful to go through the "experience of the revolution" than to write about it.

The Author

Petrograd
November 30, 1917

Written in August-September 1917
First published in pamphlet form in 1918

THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

October 25 26, 1917

1

TO THE WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS

The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has begun. *The vast majority of the Soviets are represented at the Congress.* A number of delegates from the Peasants' Soviets are also present The mandate of the compromising Central Executive Committee has terminated. Backed by the will of the vast majority of workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which has taken place in Petrograd, the Congress takes the power into its own hands.

The *Provisional Government has been overthrown. The majority of the* members of the Provisional Government have already been arrested.

The Soviet government will propose an immediate democratic peace to all the nations and an immediate armistice on all fronts. *It will secure the* transfer of the estates of the landlords, the crown and monasteries to the peasants' committees without compensation, it will protect the rights of the soldiers by introducing complete democracy in the army; it will establish workers' control over production, it will ensure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the time appointed, it will see to it that bread is supplied to the cities and articles of prime necessity to the villages, it will guarantee all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right of self-determination.

The Congress decrees: all power in the localities shall pass to the Soviets of *Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies*, which must guarantee genuine revolutionary order.

The Congress calls upon the soldiers in the trenches to be vigilant and firm. The Congress of Soviets *is convinced that the revolutionary army* will be able to defend the revolution against all attacks of imperialism until such time as the new government succeeds in concluding a democratic

peace, which it will propose directly to all nations. The new government will do everything to supply all the needs of the revolutionary army by means of a determined policy of requisitions and taxation of the propertied classes, and also to improve the condition of soldiers' families.

The Kornilovites—Kerensky, Kaledin and others—are attempting to bring troops against Petrograd. Several detachments, whom Kerensky had got to move by deceit, have come over to the side of the insurgent people.

Soldiers, actively resist Kerensky, the Kornilovite! Be on your guard!

Railwaymen, hold up all troop trains dispatched by Kerensky against Petrograd!

Soldiers, workers and employees, the fate of the revolution and the fate of the democratic peace is in your hands!

Long live the Revolution!

THE ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

THE DELEGATES FROM THE PEASANTS' SOVIETS

Rabochi i Soldat (*Worker and Soldier*) No. 9
November 8 [October 26], 1917

2
REPORT ON PEACE

October 26, 1917

The question of peace is a burning and painful question of the day. Much has been said and written on the subject, and all of you, no doubt, have discussed it quite a lot. Permit me, therefore, to proceed to read a declaration which the government you elect should publish.

Decree on Peace

The workers' and peasants' government created by the revolution of October 24-25 and backed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies calls upon all the belligerent nations and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace.

By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working and toiling classes of all the belligerent countries, exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving—a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—the government means an immediate peace without annexations (*i.e.*, the seizure of foreign lands, or the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without indemnities.

The government of Russia calls upon all the belligerent nations to conclude such a peace immediately, and expresses its readiness to take the most resolute measures without the least delay, pending the final ratification of the terms of this peace by authoritative assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

In accordance with the sense of justice of the democracy in general, and of the toiling classes in particular, the government conceives the annexation, or seizure of foreign lands to mean the incorporation into a large or powerful state of a small or feeble nation without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to

or forcibly retained as part of, the given state, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant, overseas countries.

If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained as part of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire—no matter whether expressed in the press, at public meetings, in the decisions of parties, or in protests and uprisings against national oppression—it is not permitted the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation and without the least pressure being brought to bear, such incorporation is annexation, *i.e.*, seizure and coercion.

The government considers it the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war for the purpose of dividing up among the strong and rich nations the feeble nationalities they have conquered, and solemnly announces its determination immediately to sign terms of peace to stop this war on the conditions indicated, which are equally just for all nationalities without exception.

At the same time the government declares that it does not regard the above-mentioned terms of peace as an ultimatum; in other words, it is prepared to consider any other terms of peace, but only insists that they be advanced by any of the belligerent nations as speedily as possible, and that in the proposals of peace there should be absolute clarity and the complete absence of all ambiguity and secrecy.

The government abolishes secret diplomacy, and, for its part, announces its firm intention to conduct all negotiations quite openly under the eyes of the whole people. It will immediately proceed to the full publication of the secret treaties endorsed or concluded by the government of landlords and capitalists from February to October 25, 1917. The government proclaims the absolute and immediate annulment of everything contained in these secret treaties that is aimed, as is mostly the case, at securing advantages and privileges for the Russian landlords and capitalists and at the retention, or extension, of the annexations made by the Great Russians.

Appealing to the governments and peoples of all countries immediately to begin open negotiations for peace, the government, for its part, announces its readiness to conduct these negotiations both in writing, by telegraph, and by negotiations between representatives of the various countries, or at a conference of such representatives. In order to facilitate such negotiations, the government is appointing its authoritative representative to neutral countries.

The government proposes an immediate armistice to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, and, for its part, considers it desirable that this armistice should be concluded for a period of not less than three months, *i.e.*, a period long enough to permit the completion of negotiations for peace with the participation of the representatives of all peoples or nations, without exception, involved in or compelled to take part in the war and the summoning of authoritative assemblies of the represen-

tatives of the peoples of all countries for the final ratification of the terms of peace

While addressing this proposal for peace to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Provisional Workers and Peasants' Government of Russia appeals in particular to the class conscious workers of the three most advanced nations of mankind and the largest states participating in the present war, namely, Great Britain, France and Germany The workers of these countries have made the greatest contributions to the cause of progress and Socialism, they have furnished the great examples of the Chartist movement in England, a number of revolutions of historic importance by the French proletariat, and, finally, the heroic struggle against the Anti Socialist Law in Germany and the example shown to the workers of the whole world in the prolonged, persistent and disciplined work of creating mass proletarian organizations in Germany All these examples of proletarian heroism and historical creative work are a pledge that the workers of the countries mentioned will understand the duty that now lies upon them of saving mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences For these workers, by comprehensive, determined, and supremely energetic action, can help us to bring to a successful conclusion the cause of peace, and at the same time the cause of the emancipation of the toiling and exploited masses of the population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation

* * *

The workers' and peasants government created by the revolution of October 24 25 and backed by the Soviets of Workers' Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies must start immediate negotiations for peace Our appeal must be addressed both to the governments and to the peoples We cannot ignore the governments, for that would delay the possibility of concluding peace, and the people's government dare not do that, but we have no right not to appeal to the peoples at the same time Everywhere there are differences between the governments and the peoples, and we must therefore help the peoples to interfere in the questions of war and peace We will, of course insist upon the whole of our program for a peace without annexations and indemnities We shall not retreat from it, but we must deprive our enemies of the opportunity of saying that their conditions are different from ours and that therefore it is useless to start negotiations with us No, we must deprive them of that advantageous position and not advance our terms in the form of an ultimatum Therefore the point is included that we will consider all terms of peace and all proposals We shall consider them, but that does not necessarily mean that we shall accept them We shall submit them to the judgment of the Constituent Assembly, which will have the power to decide what *concessions* can and what cannot be made We are combating the duplicity of governments which pay lip service to peace and justice, but

in fact wage usurpatory and predatory wars. No government will say all it thinks. We, however, are opposed to secret diplomacy and will act openly under the eyes of the whole people. We do not, and never did, close our eyes to difficulties. War cannot be ended by refusal, it cannot be ended by one side only. We are proposing an armistice for three months, but shall not reject a shorter period, so that the exhausted army may breathe freely, if even for a little while, and, moreover, in all the civilized countries national assemblies must be summoned for the discussion of the terms.

In proposing an immediate armistice, we appeal to the class-conscious workers of the countries that have done so much for the development of the proletarian movement. We appeal to the workers of England, where there was the Chartist movement, to the workers of France, who have in repeated uprisings displayed the strength of their class-consciousness, and to the workers of Germany, who waged the fight against the Anti-Socialist Law and have created powerful organizations.

In the manifesto of March 14, we called for the overthrow of the bankers, but, far from overthrowing our own bankers, we entered into an alliance with them. Now we have overthrown the government of the bankers.

That government and the bourgeoisie will make every effort to unite their forces and drown the workers' and peasants' revolution in blood. But the three years of war have been a good lesson to the masses: the Soviet movement in other countries and the mutiny in the German navy, which was crushed by the Junkers of Wilhelm the hangman. Finally, we must remember that we are not living in the wilds of Africa, but in Europe, where news can spread quickly.

The workers' movement will triumph and will pave the way to peace and Socialism.

Published in the
Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee No. 208,
November 9 [October 27], 1917 and
Pravda No. 171, November 10 [October 28], 1917

3

REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION ON THE REPORT ON PEACE

OCTOBER 26, 1917

I shall not touch on the general character of the declaration. The government which your Congress sets up may introduce amendments to unessential points.

I shall declare my decided opposition to lending our demand for peace the form of an ultimatum. An ultimatum may prove fatal to our whole cause. We cannot demand that because of some insignificant departure from our demands the imperialist governments should have the opportunity to say that it was impossible to enter into negotiations for peace owing to our irreconcilability

We shall send out our appeal everywhere, it will be made known to everybody It will be impossible to conceal the terms proposed by our workers' and peasants' government

It will be impossible to hush up our workers' and peasants' revolution, which has overthrown the government of bankers and landlords.

The governments might not reply to an ultimatum, they would be obliged to reply to the text we have proposed. Let it be known to all what their governments have in mind. We do not want any secrets. We want a government to be always under the control of the public opinion of its country.

What will the peasant of some remote province say if, owing to our insistence on ultimatums, he will not know what another government wants? He will say, "Comrades, why did you preclude the possibility of any terms of peace being proposed? I would have discussed them, I would have examined them, and would then have instructed my representatives in the Constituent Assembly how to act. I am prepared to fight by revolutionary means for just terms if the governments do not agree, but there might be such terms for certain countries that I would be prepared to recommend those governments to go on fighting themselves The complete realization of our ideas depends solely on the overthrow of the whole capitalist system. This is what the peasant might say to us, and he would accuse us of being excessively uncompromising over trifles, when the chief thing for us

is to expose all the vileness, all the baseness of the bourgeoisie and of its crowned and uncrowned hangmen placed at the head of the governments.

We dare not and must not afford the governments the opportunity to take refuge behind our uncompromisingness and to conceal from the peoples why they are being sent to the shambles. This is a drop, but we dare not and must not reject this drop, which will wear away the stone of bourgeois usurpation. An ultimatum would make the position of our opponents easier. But we shall make all the terms known to the people. We shall confront all the governments with our terms, and let them make answer to their people. We shall submit all peace proposals to the Constituent Assembly for decision.

There is still another point, comrades, to which you must direct the most careful attention. The secret treaties must be published. The clauses regarding annexations and indemnities must be annulled. There are various clauses, comrades—the predatory governments, you know, not only made agreements among themselves as to the plunder, but among such agreements they also included economic agreements and various other clauses regarding friendly relations.

We shall not bind ourselves by treaties. We shall not allow ourselves to be enmeshed by treaties. We reject all clauses dealing with plunder and violence, but we shall welcome all clauses containing provisions for friendly relations and economic agreements; those we cannot reject. We propose an armistice of three months; we choose a lengthy period because the peoples are exhausted, the peoples yearn for a respite from this bloody shambles which has lasted over three years. We must realize that the people must be given the opportunity to discuss the terms of peace and to express their will with the help of parliament, and this requires time. We therefore demand a lengthy armistice, so that the army in the trenches may enjoy a respite from this nightmare of constant slaughter; but we shall not reject proposals for a shorter armistice; we shall examine them, and it is incumbent on us to accept them, even if we are offered an armistice of a month or a month and a half. Our proposal for an armistice too must not be in the form of an ultimatum, for we will not give our enemies the opportunity to conceal the whole truth from the peoples, using our irreconcilability as a pretext. It must not be in the form of an ultimatum, for it is criminal for a government not to desire an armistice. If, however, we do not put our proposal for an armistice in the form of an ultimatum, we shall thereby compel the governments to appear as criminals in the eyes of the people, and the peoples will show such criminals scant ceremony. The objection is raised that by not issuing ultimatums we display our impotence, but it is time to cast aside all bourgeois cant when speaking of the strength of the people. According to the bourgeois conception, strength means that the masses go blindly to the slaughter in obedience to the behest of the imperialist governments. The bourgeoisie admit a state to be strong only when it can, by the whole might of the government apparatus, throw

the masses wherever the bourgeois rulers want. Our idea of strength is a different one. In our opinion a state is strong by virtue of the consciousness of the masses. It is strong when the masses know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously. We need not fear to tell the truth about fatigue, for what state is now not fatigued, what nation does not talk about it openly? Take Italy, where, owing to this fatigue, there was a lengthy revolutionary movement demanding the termination of the slaughter. Are not mass demonstrations of workers taking place in Germany, at which the demand for the termination of the war is raised? Was it not fatigue that provoked the mutiny in the German navy that was *so ruthlessly suppressed by that hangman, Wilhelm, and his hirelings?* If such things are possible in so disciplined a country as Germany, where they are beginning to talk about fatigue and about putting an end to the war, we need not fear to say the same openly, because it is the truth, equally true both of our country and of all the belligerent and even non belligerent countries.

Pravda No 171,
November 10 [October 28], 1917

4

REPORT ON THE LAND

OCTOBER 26, 1917

We consider that the revolution has proved and demonstrated how im-ortant it is that the land question should be stated clearly. The outbreak armed uprising, the second, or October Revolution, clearly proves that e land must be handed over to the peasants. The government that has een overthrown and the compromising parties of the Mensheviks and So-alist-Revolutionaries committed a crime when they kept postponing the ettlement of the land question on various pretexts and thereby brought the ountry to a state of ruin and confronted it with a peasant revolt. Their lk about riots and anarchy in the countryside sounds false, cowardly and eceitful. Where and when have riots and anarchy been called forth by wise easures? If the government had acted wisely, and if their measures had et the needs of the poor peasants, would there have been unrest among the easant masses? But all the measures of the government, approved by the vksentyev and Dan Soviets, went counter to the interests of the peasants nd compelled them to revolt.

Having brought about a revolt, the government began to howl about iots and anarchy, for which they themselves were responsible. They would ain have crushed it by blood and iron, but were themselves swept away by he armed uprising of the revolutionary soldiers, sailors and workers. he first duty of the government of the workers' and peasants' revolution nust be to settle the land question, which can pacify and satisfy the vast nasses of poor peasants. I shall read you the points of a decree your Soviet overnment must promulgate. In one of the points of this decree is embo-lied the Mandate to the Land Committees, compiled from 242 mandates rom local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

Decree on the Land

1. Landlord ownership of land is abolished forthwith without compen-ation.

2. The landed estates, as also all crown, monasterial and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, farm buildings and everything per-taining thereto, shall be placed at the disposal of the rural area Land Com-

mittees and the district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

3. All damage to confiscated property, which henceforth belongs to the whole people, is proclaimed a felony punishable by the revolutionary courts. The district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies shall take all necessary measures to guarantee the observance of strict order during the confiscation of the landed estates, to determine estates of what size, and what particular estates, shall be subject to confiscation, to draw up inventories of all property confiscated and to protect in a strict revolutionary way all agricultural enterprises transferred to the people, with all structures, implements, livestock, supplies, etc.

4. The following peasant Mandate, compiled by the *Izvestia of the All Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies* from 242 local peasant mandates and published in No. 88 of the *Izvestia* (Petrograd, August 19, 1917), shall everywhere serve as a directive in carrying through the great land reforms until a final decision on the latter is taken by the Constituent Assembly.

5. The land of ordinary peasants and ordinary Cossacks shall not be confiscated

MANDATE OF THE PEASANTRY ON THE LAND

"The land question in its full scope can be settled only by a National Constituent Assembly.

"The most just settlement of the land question is as follows

"(1) *Private ownership of land shall be abolished forever,* land shall not be sold, purchased, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated.

"All land, whether *state, appanage, crown, monasterial, church, factory, primogenitory, private, public, peasant, etc., shall be taken over without compensation* and become the property of the whole people, to be used by those who cultivate it.

"Persons who suffer by this property revolution shall be entitled to public support only for the period necessary for adaptation to the new conditions of life

"(2) All mineral wealth, *e g*, ore, oil, coal, salt, etc, as well as all forests and waters of state importance, shall be reserved for the exclusive use of the state. Small streams, lakes, woods, etc., shall be reserved for the use of the communities and administered by the local government bodies.

"(3) Lands with *highly developed* forms of cultivation, *e g.*, orchards, plantations, nurseries, hothouses, etc., *shall not be divided up, but shall be converted into model farms,* to be cultivated exclu-

sively *by the state or by the communities*, depending on their size and importance.

"Urban and village household land, orchards and vegetable gardens shall be reserved for the use of their present owners, the size of the holdings, and the amount of taxation levied for the use thereof, to be determined by law.

"(4) Stud farms, government and private pedigree stock and poultry farms, etc., shall be confiscated and become the property of the whole people, to be used exclusively by the state or by the communities, depending on their size and importance.

"The question of compensation shall be examined by the Constituent Assembly.

"(5) All livestock and farm implements of the confiscated estates shall be reserved for the exclusive use of the state or the communities, depending on their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid therefore.

"The farm implements of peasants with little land shall not be subject to confiscation.

"(6) The right to use the land shall belong to all citizens of the Russian state (without distinction of sex) desiring to cultivate it by their own labour, with the help of their families, or in partnership, but only as long as they are able to cultivate it. The employment of hired labour is prohibited.

"In the event of the temporary physical disablement of any member of a village community for a period of up to two years, the village community shall be obliged to assist him for this period by collectively cultivating his land until he is again able to work.

"Peasants, who, owing to old age or ill-health, are permanently disabled and personally unable to cultivate the land shall lose their right to the use of it, but, in return, shall receive a pension from the state.

"(7) Land tenure shall be on an equality basis, *i.e.*, the land shall be distributed among the toilers in conformity with a labour standard or a consumption standard, depending on local conditions.

"There shall be absolutely no restriction on the forms of land tenure: household, farm, communal, or co-operative, as shall be decided in each individual village.

"(8) All land, when alienated, shall become part of the national land fund. Its distribution among the toilers shall be controlled by the local and central government bodies, from democratically organized village and city communities, in which there are no distinctions of social rank, to central regional government bodies.

"The land fund shall be subject to periodical redistribution, depending on the growth of population and the increase in the productiveness and efficiency of agriculture.

"When the boundaries of allotments are altered, the primary nucleus of the allotment shall be left intact

"The land of lapsed members shall revert to the land fund, preferential right to such land shall be given to the near relatives of the lapsed members, or to persons designated by the latter

"The cost of fertilizers and improvements put into the land, to the extent that they have not been fully exhausted at the time an allotment reverts to the land fund, shall be compensated

"Should the available land fund in a particular district prove inadequate for the needs of the local population, the surplus population shall be settled elsewhere

"The state shall take upon itself the organization of resettlement and shall bear the cost thereof, as well as the cost of supplying implements, etc

"Resettlement shall be effected in the following order landless peasants desiring to resettle, then members of the community who are of depraved or vicious habits, deserters, and so on, and, finally, by lot or by agreement "

The entire contents of this mandate, as expressing the absolute will of the vast majority of the class conscious peasants of all Russia, are proclaimed a provisional law, which, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, shall be carried into effect as far as possible immediately,, and as to certain of its provisions with due gradualness, as shall be determined by the district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies

* * *

Voices are being raised here that the decree itself and the Mandate were drawn up by the Socialist Revolutionaries What of it? Does it matter who drew them up? As a democratic government, we cannot ignore the decision of the rank and file of the people, even though we may disagree with it In the fire of experience, applying the decree in practice, and carrying it *out locally, the peasants will themselves realize where the truth lies* And even if the peasants continue to follow the Socialist Revolutionaries, even if they give this party a majority in the Constituent Assembly, we shall still say—what of it? Experience is the best teacher and it will show who is right Let the peasant solve this problem from one end and let us solve it from the other *Experience will oblige us to draw together in the general stream of revolutionary creative work,* in the elaboration of new state forms We must be guided by experience, we must allow complete freedom to the creative faculties of the masses The old government, which was overthrown by armed uprising, wanted to settle the land *question* with the help of the old, unchanged tsarist bureaucracy But instead of solving the question, the bureaucracy only fought the peasants The peas

ants have learnt something during the eight months of revolution; they want to settle all land questions themselves. We are therefore opposed to all amendments to this draft law. We want no details in it, for we are writing a decree, not a program of action. Russia is vast, and local conditions vary. We believe that the peasants will be able to solve the problem correctly, better than we could ourselves. Whether they do it in our spirit or in the spirit of the program of the Socialist-Revolutionaries is not the point. The point is that the peasants should be firmly assured that there are no more landlords in the countryside, that they themselves must decide all questions, and that they themselves must arrange their own lives.

Published in the *Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee* No. 209
and *Pravda* No. 171,
of November 10 [October 28], 1917

DRAFT REGULATIONS ON WORKERS' CONTROL

1. *Workers' control* over the production, warehousing, purchase and sale of all products and raw materials shall be introduced in all industrial, commercial, banking, agricultural and other enterprises employing not less than five workers and employees (together), or with a turnover of not less than 10,000 rubles per annum.

2. Workers' control shall be carried out by all the workers and employees of an enterprise, either directly, if the enterprise is small enough to permit it, or through their elected representatives, who shall be elected *immediately* at general meetings, at which minutes of the elections shall be taken and the names of those elected communicated to the government and to the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

3. Unless permission is given by the elected representatives of the workers and employees, the closing of an enterprise or the cessation of work of state importance (see 7), or any change in its process, is absolutely prohibited.

4. The elected representatives shall have access to *all* books and documents and to *all* warehouses and stocks of materials, instruments and products, without exception.

5. The decisions of the elected representatives of the workers and employees are binding upon the owners of enterprises and may be annulled only by trade unions and their congresses.

6. In all enterprises of state importance *all* owners and *all* representatives of the workers and employees elected for the purpose of exercising workers' control shall be answerable to the state for the maintenance of the strictest order and discipline and for the protection of property. Persons guilty of neglect of duty, concealment of stocks, accounts, etc., shall be punished by the confiscation of the whole of their property and by imprisonment for a term of up to five years.

7. By enterprises of state importance are meant all enterprises working for defence purposes, or in any way connected with the manufacture of articles necessary for the existence of the masses of the population.

8. More detailed rules on workers' control shall be drawn up by the local Soviets of Workers' Deputies and by conferences of factory committees, and also by committees of employees at general meetings of their representatives.

Pravda No. 178, November 16 [3], 1917

FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS AND TO ALL THE TOILING CLASSES OF RUSSIA

Comrades,

It is common knowledge that the majority at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies consisted of delegates belonging to the Bolshevik Party.

This fact is fundamental for a proper understanding of the victorious revolution that has just taken place in Petrograd, Moscow and the whole of Russia. Yet this fact is forgotten and ignored by all the followers of the capitalists and their unwitting supporters, who are undermining the fundamental principle of the new revolution, namely, *All power to the Soviets*. There must be no government in Russia other than a *Soviet government*. The Soviet power has been won in Russia, and the transfer of government from one Soviet party to another is guaranteed without revolution, simply by a decision of the Soviets, simply by new elections of deputies to the Soviets.

The majority at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets belongs to the Bolshevik Party. Therefore only a government formed by that Party will be a Soviet government. And everybody knows that the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, several hours prior to the formation of the new government, and before submitting the list of its members to the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, called to its session three of the most prominent members of the group of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, Comrades Kamkov, Spiro and Karelin, and *invited them* to join the new government. We extremely regret that the Left Socialist-Revolutionary comrades refused; we regard their refusal as impermissible on the part of revolutionaries and champions of the toilers. We are ready at any moment to include Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the government, but we declare that, as the majority party at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, we are entitled to form the government, *and it is our duty* to the people to do so.

Everybody knows that the Central Committee of our Party submitted a purely Bolshevik list of People's Commissars to the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and that *the Congress approved this list for a purely Bolshevik government.*

Hence the statements to the effect that the Bolshevik government is *not* a Soviet government are absolute lies, and proceed, and can proceed, only from the enemies of the people, from the enemies of the Soviet power On the contrary, now, after the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and until the Third Congress meets, or until new elections to the Soviets are held, or until a new government is formed by the Central Executive Committee, *only* a Bolshevik government can be regarded as the *Soviet* government.

* * *

Comrades, yesterday, November 4, several *members of the Central* Committee of our Party and of the Council of Peoples' Commissars—Kamenev, Zinoviev, Nogin, Rykov, Milyutin and a few others—resigned from the Central Committee of our Party, and the three last named from the Council of People's Commissars. In a large party like ours, notwithstanding the proletarian and revolutionary line of our policy, it is inevitable that individual comrades should be found who do not possess the firmness and determination required in the struggle against the enemies of the people. The tasks that now face our Party are truly vast, the difficulties are enormous, and several members of our Party who formerly occupied responsible posts have flinched in face of the pressure of the bourgeoisie and fled from our ranks. The bourgeoisie and its supporters are *jubilant* over this fact and are maliciously rejoicing, prating about disintegration and predicting the fall of the Bolshevik government.

Comrades, do not believe these lies. The comrades who have resigned have acted like deserters, since they not only quitted the posts entrusted to them, but violated the direct decision of the Central Committee of our Party enjoining them to delay their resignation at least until a decision be taken by the Petrograd and Moscow Party organizations We vigorously condemn this desertion. We are profoundly convinced that *all* class conscious workers, soldiers and peasants who belong to or sympathize with our Party will condemn the conduct of the deserters with equal vigour.

But we declare that not for one minute, and not in one iota, can the desertion of several individuals belonging to the leading ranks of our Party shake the unity of the *masses* who support our Party, and that it therefore cannot shake our Party.

You remember, comrades, that two of the deserters, Kamenev and Zinoviev, acted as deserters and strike-breakers even before the uprising in Petrograd, for they not only voted against uprising at the decisive meeting of the Central Committee on October 10, 1917, but even *after* the decision had

been taken by the Central Committee agitated among the Party workers against uprising. It is common knowledge that at that time newspapers which fear to take the side of the workers and are more inclined to side with the bourgeoisie (*e.g.*, the *Novaya Zhizn*), in common with the whole bourgeois press, raised howls and cries to the effect that our Party was "disintegrating," that "the uprising was collapsing," and so on. But events swiftly refuted the lies and slanders of some and the doubts, waverings and cowardice of others. The "storm" they tried to raise around the efforts of Kamenev and Zinoviev to prevent the Petrograd uprising proved to be *a storm in a teacup*, and the great enthusiasm of the masses, the great heroism of millions of workers, soldiers, and peasants in Petrograd, in Moscow, at the front, in the trenches and in the villages, brushed aside the deserters as easily as a railway train brushes aside splinters.

Shame, then, on all the faint-hearted, waverers and doubters, on all who allow themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie or who have succumbed to the outcries of its direct and indirect supporters! *There is not the slightest* hesitation among the *mass* of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd, Moscow and other places. Our Party stands solidly and firmly, like one man, in defence of the Soviet power, in defence of the interests of the toilers, and first and foremost of the workers and poor peasants.

The chorus of bourgeois hacks and those who allow themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie accuse us of being uncompromising, of being irreconcilable, of refusing to share power with another party. That is not true, comrades. *We have invited* and continue to invite the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries to share the power with us. It is not our fault that *they have refused*. We began the negotiations, and, after the members of the Second Congress of Soviets had dispersed, we made all kinds of concessions in the course of these negotiations, even to the point of provisionally agreeing to admit representatives of a section of the Petrograd City Duma, that nest of Kornilovites, which will be the first to be swept away by the people should the rascally Kornilovites, should the darling sons of the capitalists and landlords, the junkers, attempt once more to oppose the will of the people as they did last Sunday in Petrograd and as they would like to again (as is proved by the exposure of the conspiracy of Purishkevich and the documents seized on him yesterday, November 3). But the gentlemen who stand behind the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and act through them in the interests of the bourgeoisie interpreted our readiness to make concessions as weakness and presented us with new ultimatums. At the conference on November 3 Messrs. Abramovich and Martov appeared and presented an ultimatum: no negotiations until our government puts a stop to the arrests and to the suppression of bourgeois newspapers!

Both our Party and the Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets *refused* to accept this ultimatum, which obviously emanates from the supporters of Kaledin, the bourgeoisie, Kerensky and Kornilov. The

conspiracy of Purishkevich* and the appearance in Petrograd on November 5 of a delegation from a unit of the 17th Army Corps bringing the threat to march on Petrograd (a ridiculous threat, for the advance detachments of these Kornilovites were beaten and took to flight at Gatchina, while most of them have refused to act against the Soviets) have proved who were the *real* authors of the ultimatum of Messrs Abramovich and Martov and whom these people were *really* serving.

Let the toilers, therefore, remain confident and resolute. Never will our Party yield to the ultimatum of the minority in the Soviets, a minority which has allowed itself to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie and which despite its "good intentions" is virtually a puppet in the hands of the Kornilovites.

We stand firmly for the principle of the Soviet power, *i e.*, the power of the *majority* obtained at the last Congress of Soviets. We were willing, and *remain willing*, to share the power with the minority of the Soviets, provided that minority loyally and honestly undertakes to submit to the majority and carry out the program *approved by the whole* Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, consisting of gradual, but firm and undeviating measures towards Socialism But we will not submit to any ultimatums of groups of intellectuals who are not backed by the masses, and who *in actual fact* are backed only by the Kornilovites, the Savinkovites, the junkers, etc.

Let the toilers, therefore, remain confident and resolute! Our Party, the party of the Soviet majority, stands solid and united in defence of its interests and, as heretofore, behind our Party stands the millions of the workers in the cities, the soldiers in the trenches and the peasants in the villages, prepared at all costs to achieve the victory of peace and the victory of Socialism!

Pravda No 182,
November 20 [7], 1917

* The reference here is to the counter revolutionary conspiracy engineered by the monarchist Purishkevich shortly after the October Revolution in 1917 with the aim of overthrowing the Soviet power —*Ed*

ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND THE TOILING AND EXPLOITED PEASANTS

A Letter to the *Pravda*

Today, Saturday, November 18, in the course of a speech I made at the Peasants' Congress I was publicly asked a question to which I forthwith replied. It is essential that this question and my reply should immediately be made known to all the reading public, for while formally speaking only in my own name, I was virtually speaking in the name of the whole Bolshevik Party.

The matter was as follows.

Touching on the question of an alliance between the Bolshevik workers and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, whom many peasants at present trust, I endeavoured to show in my speech that this alliance *can* be an "honest coalition," an honest alliance, for there is *no* radical divergence of interests between the wage workers and the toiling and exploited peasants. Socialism is *fully* able to satisfy the interests of both. And *only* Socialism can satisfy their interests. Hence the possibility and necessity for an "honest coalition" between the proletarians and the toiling and exploited peasantry. A "coalition" (alliance), however, between the toiling and exploited classes, on the one hand, and the bourgeoisie, on the other, *cannot* be an "honest coalition" because of the radical divergence of interests between these classes.

Imagine, I said, that there is a majority of Bolsheviks and a minority of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the government, or even, let us assume, only one Left Socialist-Revolutionary—the Commissar of Agriculture. Could the Bolsheviks practise an honest coalition under such circumstances?

They could; for, while they are irreconcilable in their fight against the counter-revolutionary elements (including the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the defencists), the Bolsheviks would be obliged to *abstain* from voting on questions which concern purely Socialist-Revolutionary points in the land program approved by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Such, for instance, would be the principle of equal land tenure and the redistribution of land among the small peasants.

By abstaining from voting on such a point the Bolsheviks would not be changing their program in any way For, given the victory of *Socialism* (workers' control over the factories, to be followed by their expropriation, the nationalization of the banks, and the creation of a Supreme Economic Council for the regulation of the entire economic life of the country)—given that, the workers *would be obliged* to agree to the transitional measures proposed by the small toiling and exploited peasants, provided such measures were *not detrimental* to the cause of Socialism Even Kautsky, when he was still a Marxist (1899 1909), frequently admitted—I said—that the transitional measures to Socialism cannot be identical in countries with large scale and in countries with small scale agriculture

We Bolsheviks would be obliged to abstain from voting when such a point was being decided in the Council of People's Commissars or in the Central Executive Committee, for if the Left Socialist Revolutionaries (and the peasants who support them) agreed to workers' control, to the nationalization of the banks, etc , equal land tenure would be only one of the *transitional* measures to complete Socialism For the proletariat to *impose* such transitional measures would be absurd, it would be obliged, in the interests of the victory of Socialism, *to yield* to the small toiling and exploited peasants in the choice of these transitional measures, for they could do no *harm* to the cause of Socialism

Thereupon, a Left Socialist Revolutionary (it was Comrade Feofilaktov, if I am not mistaken) asked me the following question

'How would the Bolsheviks act if in the Constituent Assembly the peasants wanted to pass a law on equal land tenure, while the bourgeoisie were opposed to the peasants and the decision therefore depended on the Bolsheviks?'

I replied Under such circumstances, when the cause of Socialism would be ensured by the introduction of workers' control, the nationalization of the banks, etc , the alliance between the workers and the toiling and exploited peasants would oblige the party of the proletariat to vote for the peasants and against the bourgeoisie The Bolsheviks, in my opinion, would be entitled when the vote was being taken to make a declaration of dissent, to record their non agreement, but to abstain from voting under such circumstances would be to betray their allies *in the fight for Socialism* for the sake of a difference with them on a particular issue The Bolsheviks would *never* betray the peasants in such a situation Equal land tenure and like measures *cannot* injure Socialism if the power is in the hands of a workers' and peasants' government, workers' control has been introduced, the banks nationalized, a workers' and peasants' supreme economic body set up to direct (regulate) the *entire* economic life of the country, and so forth

Such was my reply

Pravda No 194
December 2 [November 19] 1917

THESES ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

1. The demand for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly was a perfectly legitimate part of the program of revolutionary Social-Democracy, because in a bourgeois republic a Constituent Assembly represents the highest form of democracy and because, in setting up a parliament,* the imperialist republic which was headed by Kerensky was preparing to fake the elections and violate democracy in a number of ways.

2. While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has ever since the beginning of the revolution of 1917 repeatedly emphasized that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.

3. For the transition from the bourgeois to the Socialist order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the usual bourgeois republic crowned by a Constituent Assembly), but is the only form capable of securing the most painless transition to Socialism.

4. The convocation of the Constituent Assembly in our revolution on the basis of lists submitted in the middle of October 1917 is taking place under conditions which preclude the possibility of the elections to this Constituent Assembly faithfully expressing the will of the people in general and of the toiling masses in particular.

5. Firstly, proportional representation results in a faithful expression of the will of the people only when the party lists correspond to a real division of the people according to the party groupings reflected in those lists. Here, however, as is well known, the party which from May to October had the largest number of followers among the people, and especially among the peasantry—the Socialist-Revolutionary Party—presented joint lists for the Constituent Assembly in the middle of October 1917, but split after the elections to the Constituent Assembly and before it met.

For this reason, there is not, nor can there be, even a formal correspondence between the will of the mass of the electors and the composition of the Constituent Assembly.

* In the *Pravda* version—pre-parliament.—*Ed.*

6. Secondly, a still more important, not a formal nor legal, but a social-economic, class source of the discrepancy between the will of the people, and especially of the toiling classes, on the one hand, and the composition of the Constituent Assembly, on the other, is the circumstance that the elections to the Constituent Assembly took place at a time when the overwhelming majority of the people could not yet know the full scope and significance of the October, Soviet, proletarian peasant revolution, which began on October 25, 1917, i e , after the lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly had been submitted

7. The October Revolution, which conquered power for the Soviets, and which wrested the political rule from the bourgeoisie and transferred it to the proletariat and poor peasantry, is passing under our very eyes through successive stages of development.

8. It began with the victory of October 24 25 in the capital, when the Second All Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the vanguard of the proletarians and of the most politically active section of the peasantry, gave a majority to the Bolshevik Party and put it in power

9. Then, in the course of November and December, the revolution spread to the entire army and peasantry, being manifested first of all in the dismissal of the old leading bodies (army committees, provincial peasant committees, the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies, etc)—which expressed the superseded, compromising phase of the revolution, its bourgeois, not proletarian, phase, and which were therefore inevitably bound to disappear under the pressure of the lower and broader masses of the people—and the election of new ones in their place.

10 This mighty movement of the exploited masses for the reconstruction of the leading bodies of their organizations has not ended even now, in the middle of December 1917, and the Railwaymen's Congress, which is still in session, represents one of its stages

11. Consequently, the grouping of the class forces in Russia in the course of the class struggle is in fact assuming an essentially different form in November and December 1917 from the one that could be reflected in the party lists of candidates for the Constituent Assembly compiled in the middle of October 1917.

12. Recent events in the Ukraine (partly also in Finland and Byelorussia, as well as in the Caucasus) similarly point to a regrouping of class forces which is taking place in the process of the struggle between the bourgeois nationalism of the Ukrainian Rada,* the Finnish Diet, etc , on the

* *Ukrainian Rada*—the counter revolutionary government of the nationalist Ukrainian bourgeoisie which concluded a separate peace with Germany in February 1918 and invited the Austro-German imperialists to send troops to crush the Soviet revolution —*Ed*

one hand, and the Soviet power, the proletarian-peasant revolution in each of these national republics, on the other.

13. Lastly, the civil war which was started by the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolutionary revolt against the Soviet authorities, against the workers' and peasants' government, has finally brought the class struggle to a head and has destroyed all chance of settling in a formal democratic way the very acute problems with which history has confronted the peoples of Russia, and more particularly her working class and peasantry.

14. Only the complete victory of the workers and peasants over the bourgeois and landlord revolt (as expressed in the Cadet-Kaledin movement), only the ruthless military suppression of this revolt of the slaveowners can really safeguard the proletarian-peasant revolution. The course of events and the development of the class struggle in the revolution have resulted in the slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly!"—which ignores the gains of the workers' and peasants' revolution, which ignores the Soviet power, which ignores the decisions of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, of the Second All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies, etc.—*becoming in fact* the slogan of the Cadets and the Kaledinites and of their abettors. It is growing clear to the entire people that this slogan means in fact a struggle for the elimination of the Soviet power, and that the Constituent Assembly, if it parted ways with the Soviet power, would inevitably be doomed to political extinction.

15. One particularly acute problem of national life is the problem of peace. A really revolutionary struggle for peace was commenced in Russia only after the victory of the revolution of October 25, and the first fruits of this victory were the publication of the secret treaties, the conclusion of an armistice, and the beginning of open negotiations for a general peace without annexations and indemnities.

Only now are the broad masses of the people receiving full and open opportunity to see the policy of revolutionary struggle for peace in operation and to study its results.

At the time of the elections to the Constituent Assembly the masses of the people had no such opportunity.

It is clear that a discrepancy between the composition of the Constituent Assembly and the real will of the people on the question of terminating the war is inevitable from this point of view too.

16. The result of all the above-mentioned circumstances taken in conjunction is that the Constituent Assembly, summoned on the basis of party lists compiled before the proletarian-peasant revolution, and under the rule of the bourgeoisie, must inevitably clash with the will and interests of the toiling and exploited classes which on October 25 began the Socialist revolution against the bourgeoisie. Naturally, the interests of this revolution stand higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly, even if those formal rights were not undermined by the absence in the law

on the Constituent Assembly of a provision recognizing the right of the people to hold new elections of their deputies at any moment.

17. Every attempt, direct or indirect, to consider the question of the Constituent Assembly from a formal, legal point of view, within the limits of ordinary bourgeois democracy and ignoring the class struggle and civil war, would be a betrayal of the cause of the proletariat, and the adoption of the bourgeois standpoint. It is the bounden duty of the revolutionary Social-Democrats to warn all and sundry against this error, into which a few Bolshevik leaders, who have been unable to appreciate the significance of the October uprising and the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, have fallen.

18. The only chance of securing a painless solution of the crisis which has arisen owing to the divergence between the elections to the Constituent Assembly, on the one hand, and the will of the people and the interests of the toiling and exploited classes, on the other, is for the people to exercise as broadly and as rapidly as possible the right to elect the members of the Constituent Assembly anew, and for the Constituent Assembly to accept the law of the Central Executive Committee on these new elections, for the Constituent Assembly to proclaim that it unreservedly recognizes the Soviet power, the Soviet revolution, and its policy on the questions of peace, the land and workers' control, and for it resolutely to join the camp of the enemies of the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolution.

19. Unless these conditions are observed, the crisis in connection with the Constituent Assembly can be settled only in a revolutionary way, by the Soviet power adopting the most energetic, rapid, firm and determined revolutionary measures against the Cadet-Kaledin counter-revolution, no matter under what slogans and institutions (even membership of the Constituent Assembly) this counter-revolution may screen itself. Any attempt to tie the hands of the Soviet power in this struggle would be tantamount to aiding and abetting counter-revolution.

Pravda No. 213,
December 26 [13], 1917

DRAFT DECREE ON THE SOCIALIZATION OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

The critical food situation and the threat of famine caused by the profiteering and sabotage of the capitalists and officials, as well as the general economic chaos, make it imperative to adopt extraordinary revolutionary measures to combat this evil.

In order that all citizens of the state, and particularly the toiling classes, may be able, under the leadership of their Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, to take up this fight and address themselves to the proper organization of the economic life of the country immediately and comprehensively, stopping at nothing and acting in the most revolutionary manner, the following regulations are decreed:

DRAFT DECREE ON THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE BANKS AND THE MEASURES NECESSITATED THEREBY

1. All joint-stock companies are proclaimed the property of the state.

2. Members of boards and directors of joint-stock companies, as well as all shareholders belonging to the wealthy classes (*i.e.*, possessing property exceeding 5,000 rubles or an income exceeding 500 rubles per month) shall be obliged to continue the systematic conduct of the affairs of these enterprises, observe the law on workers' control, present all shares to the State Bank and submit to the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies weekly reports on their activities.

3. State loans, foreign and domestic, are hereby annulled.

4. The interests of small holders of bonds and shares, *i.e.*, holders belonging to the toiling classes of the population, shall be fully protected.

5. Universal labour service is hereby introduced: all citizens of both sexes between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five shall be obliged to perform work assigned to them by the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, or by other organs of the Soviet power.

6. As a first step towards the introduction of universal labour service, it is decreed that members of the wealthy classes (see § 2) shall be obliged to keep, and make proper entries in, consumer-worker books, or workers' budget books, which must be presented to the appropriate workers'

organizations or to the local Soviets and their organs for weekly notation of the performance of work undertaken.

7. For the purpose of proper control and distribution of foodstuffs and other necessary products, every citizen of the state shall be obliged to join a consumers' society. The food boards, committees of supply and similar organizations, as well as the railway and transport unions, shall, under the direction of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, establish supervision to ensure the due observance of the present law. Members of the wealthy classes, in particular, shall be obliged to perform the work assigned to them by the Soviets in the sphere of organizing and conducting the affairs of the consumers' societies

8. The railway employees' unions shall urgently draw up and immediately begin to carry into effect *emergency* measures for the better organization of transport, particularly as regards the delivery of foodstuffs, fuel and other items of prime necessity, and shall be chiefly guided by the instructions and orders firstly of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies and then of the bodies authorized by them for this purpose and of the Supreme Council of National Economy. Similarly, upon the railway unions, working in conjunction with the local Soviets, shall devolve the duty of energetically combating bag trading and mercilessly suppressing profiteering, resorting if necessary to revolutionary measures.

9. Workers' organizations, unions of office employees and local Soviets shall immediately take steps to place enterprises which are closing down or have been demobilized, and also unemployed workers, to useful work, to the production of articles of necessity, and searching for orders, raw materials and fuel. While under no circumstances postponing this work, and while likewise proceeding to the exchange of country produce for city goods pending receipt of special instructions on the subject from higher bodies, the local unions and Soviets shall be strictly guided by the orders and instructions of the Supreme Council of National Economy.

10. Members of the wealthy classes shall be obliged to keep all their monetary possessions in the State Bank and its branches, or in the savings banks, and shall be entitled to withdraw not more than 100 125 rubles per week (as shall be established by the local Soviets) for living expenses; withdrawals for purposes of production and trade shall be made only on presentation of a written certificate of the organs of workers' control.

To facilitate supervision ensuring the due observance of the present law, regulations will be issued providing for the exchange of existing currency notes for new currency notes. Persons guilty of defrauding the state and the people shall be liable to the confiscation of all their property.

11. Violators of the present law, saboteurs and government officials who go on strike, as well as profiteers, shall be liable to a similar penalty, and

also to imprisonment, dispatch to the front, or hard labour. The local Soviets and their organs shall urgently decide upon the most revolutionary measures to combat these real enemies of the people.

12. The trade unions and other organizations of the toilers, acting in conjunction with the local Soviets, and with the collaboration of reliable persons recommended by Party and other organizations, shall form mobile groups of inspectors to supervise the observance of the present law, to verify the quantity and quality of work performed and to bring to trial before the revolutionary courts persons guilty of violating or evading the law.

Written in December 1917

Published in *Narodnoye Khozaistvo (National Economy)* No. 11, 1918

QUESTIONS TO THE DELEGATES OF THE FIRST ARMY CONGRESS ON DEMOBILIZATION

1) Is the likelihood great or small that the Germans will start an offensive in the near future:

a) from the standpoint of the physical and technical possibility of an offensive in winter;

b) from the standpoint of the mood of the mass of the German soldiers; is that mood capable of preventing an offensive, or even of retarding it?

2) May it be assumed that the Germans, if we immediately break off peace negotiations, and if their troops immediately pass to the offensive, are capable of inflicting decisive defeat upon us? Can they take Petrograd?

3) Is it to be feared that the news that the peace negotiations have been broken off will result in a widespread mood of anarchy in the army and in desertions from the front, or may we be confident that the army will staunchly hold the front even after the receipt of such news?

4) Would our army be capable, from the military standpoint, of resisting a German offensive, if it began on January 14 [1]? If not, how long will it be before our army is in a position to resist a German offensive?

5) In the event of a swift German advance, could our army retire in good order and preserve its artillery, and if so, could the German advance into the heart of Russia be retarded for long?

6) General conclusion: from the point of view of the state of the army, should we strive to drag out the peace negotiations, or would a revolutionarily abrupt and immediate rupture of peace negotiations, because of the Germans' annexationist demands be preferable as a decisive and firm step which would prepare the ground for a possible revolutionary war?

7) Should we at once undertake intensive agitation against the Germans' annexationist demands and for a revolutionary war?

8) Would it be possible at very short notice (5-10 days, say) to arrange a canvas of fairly wide sections of the army with a view to obtaining more regular and fuller replies to the above questions?

9) Is it to be hoped that the dissensions with the Ukrainians will weaken, or even give way to a firm cementation of forces, at the news of the Germans' annexationist demands, or is it to be expected that the Ukrainians will take advantage of the Great Russians' increased difficulties to fight the Great Russians with greater vigour?

10) If the army could vote would it be in favour of immediate peace on annexationist (loss of the occupied regions) and economically drastic terms for Russia, or would it favour an extreme exertion of effort for a revolutionary war, *i.e.*, resistance to the Germans?

Written at the end of December 1917
First published in 1927 in
Proceedings of the Lenin Institute, Vol. II

HOW TO ORGANIZE COMPETITION

Bourgeois writers have been writing reams in praise of competition, private enterprise, and all the other magnificent glories and charms of the capitalists and of the capitalist system Socialists were accused of refusing to understand the importance of these glories, and of ignoring "human nature" As a matter of fact, capitalism long ago abolished small, independent commodity production, under which competition could develop enterprise, energy, and bold initiative to any *considerable* extent, and substituted for it large and very large-scale factory production, joint-stock companies, syndicates and other monopolies Under *such* capitalism, competition means the incredibly brutal suppression of the enterprise, energy and bold initiative of the *masses* of the population, of the overwhelming majority, of ninety nine out of every hundred toilers, it also means that competition is superseded by financial fraud, despotism, servility on the upper rungs of the social ladder

Socialism does not extinguish competition, on the contrary, it for the first time creates the opportunity for employing it on a really *wide* and on a really *mass* scale, for actually drawing the majority of the population into an arena of labour in which they can display their abilities, develop their capacities, reveal their talents, which are an untapped spring among the people, and which capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions.

Now that a Socialist government is in power our task is to organize competition.

The hangers on and spongers on the bourgeoisie described Socialism as a uniform, routine, monotonous and drab barrack system The lackeys of the money bags, the lickspittles of the exploiters—Messieurs the bourgeois intellectuals—used Socialism as a bogey to "frighten" the people, who, precisely under capitalism, were doomed to penal servitude and the barracks, to arduous, monotonous toil, to a life of extreme poverty and semi starvation The first step towards the emancipation of the people from this penal servitude is the confiscation of the landed estates, the introduction of workers' control and the nationalization of the banks The next steps will be the nationalization of the factories and works, the compulsory organization of the whole population *in consumers' co*operative societies,

which are at the same time co-operative societies for the sale of products, and the state monopoly of the sale of grain and other articles of necessity.

Only now is the opportunity created for the truly mass display of enterprise, competition and bold initiative. Every factory from which the capitalist has been expelled, or in which he has at least been curbed by genuine workers' control, every village from which the landlord exploiter has been smoked out and his land confiscated, is now, and has only now become, a field in which the working man can reveal his talents, unbend his back, straighten himself, and feel that he is a human being. For the first time after centuries of working for others, of working in subjection for the exploiter, it has become possible to *work for oneself* and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern technique and culture in one's work.

Of course, this greatest change in human history from working in subjection to working for oneself cannot take place without friction, difficulties, conflicts and violence against the confirmed parasites and their hangers-on. No worker has any illusions on that score. Hardened by many long years of penal servitude for the exploiters, by the exploiters' insults and mockery, and by dire want, the workers and poor peasants know that time is needed to *break* the resistance of the exploiters. The workers and peasants are not in the least affected by the sentimental illusions of Messieurs the intellectuals, of the whole crowd of *Novaya Zhizn*-ites and other jelly-fish, who "shouted" against the capitalists until they were hoarse, "gesticulated" against them and "denounced" them, only to burst into tears and to behave like whipped puppies when it came to *deeds*, to putting threats into action, to carrying out in practice the work of *overthrowing* the capitalists.

The great change from working in subjection to working for oneself, to labour planned and organized on a gigantic, national (to a certain extent international, world) scale requires—in addition to "*military*" measures for the suppression of the resistance of the exploiters—extensive *organizational* measures, organizational effort on the part of the proletariat and the poor peasants. The organizational task is closely interwoven with the task of ruthlessly suppressing by military methods yesterday's slaveowners (capitalists) and their packs of lackeys—Messieurs the bourgeois intellectuals. Yesterday's slaveowners and their servants, the intellectuals, say and think, "We have always been organizers and chiefs. We have commanded, and we want to continue doing so. We shall refuse to obey the 'common people,' the workers and peasants. We shall not submit to them. We shall convert knowledge into a weapon for the defence of the privileges of the money-bags and of the rule of capital over the people."

That is what the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals say, think, and do. From the point of view of *self-interest* their conduct is intelligible. The hangers-on and spongers on the feudal landlords—the priests, the

scribes, the bureaucrats as Gogol depicted them, * and the "intellectuals" who hated Belinsky**—also found it "hard" to part with serfdom. But the cause of the exploiters and of their intellectual menials is hopeless The workers and peasants are breaking their resistance—unfortunately, not yet firmly, resolutely and ruthlessly enough—*but they will break it*

"They" think that the "common people," the "common" worker and poor peasant, will be unable to cope with the great, truly heroic, in the world historical sense of the word, organizational tasks which the Socialist revolution has imposed upon the shoulders of the toilers. The intellectuals who are accustomed to serving the capitalists and the capitalist state say in order to console themselves "You cannot do without us" But their insolent calculations are falling to the ground already educated men are coming over to the side of the people, to the side of the toilers, and are helping to break the resistance of the servants of capital There are a great many talented organizers among the peasants and the working class, and they are only just beginning to become conscious of themselves, to awaken, to stretch out towards the great living creative work, to undertake to build Socialist society independently

One of the most important tasks today, if not the most important task, is to develop this independent initiative of the workers, and of all the toilers and exploited generally, as widely as possible in creative *organizational work* At all costs we must break the old, *absurd*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so called "upper classes," only the rich, and those who have gone through the school of the rich, can administer the state and direct the organizational construction of Socialist society

This is a prejudice It is fostered by decaying routine, by conservativeness, slavish habits, and still more by the sordid selfishness of the capitalists, in whose interest it is to administer while plundering and to plunder while administering No The workers will not forget for a moment that they need the power of knowledge The extraordinary striving after knowledge which the workers reveal, particularly now, shows that mistaken ideas about this do not and cannot exist among the proletariat But every *rank and file* worker and peasant who is able to read and write, who can judge people and has practical experience, can do *organizational* work Among the "common people," of whom the bourgeois intellectuals speak with such scorn and contempt, there are *masses* of people like that This sort of talent among the working class and the peasantry is a rich and still untapped spring

* N V *Gogol* (1809 185 … type of bureaucrat depicted in the celebratec

** *V G Belinsky* (1811 … tic and publicist who passionately flagellated serfdom and whose works were of enormous importance in helping to frame Russian revolutionary public opinion —*Ed*

The workers and peasants are still "shy," they have not yet become accustomed to the idea that *they* are the *ruling* class now; they are not yet sufficiently resolute. The revolution could not *at one stroke* create these qualities in millions and millions of people who all their lives had been compelled by hunger and want to work under the threat of the stick. But the strength, the virility, the invincibility of the Revolution of October 1917 lie in the fact that it *awakens* these qualities, breaks down the old impediments, tears off the obsolete shackles, and leads the toilers on to the road of *independent* creation of a new life.

Accounting and control—this is the *main* economic task of every Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, of every consumers' society, of every union or committee of supplies, of every factory committee or organ of workers' control in general.

The fight against the old habit of regarding the measure of labour, the means of production, from the point of view of the man in subjection—*i.e.*, the habit of shirking burdens, of trying to get as much as possible out of the *bourgeoisie*—this fight must be waged. The advanced, class-conscious workers have already started this fight, and they are offering determined resistance to the many newcomers who came into the factory environment during the war and who now want to treat the *people's* factory, the factory that has come into the possession of the people, in the old way, with the sole end in view of "making as much as possible and clearing out." All the class-conscious, honest and thoughtful peasants and toilers will take their place in this fight by the side of the advanced workers.

Accounting and control, *if* carried on by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the supreme state power, or on the instructions, on the authority, *of this* power—widespread, general, universal accounting and control, the accounting and control of the amount of labour performed and of the distribution of products—is the *essence* of the Socialist change, since the political rule of the proletariat has been created and ensured.

The accounting and control that is essential for the transition to Socialism can be only mass accounting and control. The voluntary and conscientious co-operation of the *masses* of the workers and peasants in accounting and controlling with revolutionary enthusiasm *the rich, the rogues, the idlers and hooligans* can alone conquer these survivals of accursed capitalist society, this offal of humanity, these hopelessly decayed and atrophied limbs, this contagion, this plague, this ulcer that Socialism has inherited from capitalism.

Workers and peasants, toilers and exploited! The land, the banks, the factories and works now belong to the whole of the people! You *yourselves* must set to work to take account of and control the production and distribution of products—this is the *only* road to the victory of Socialism, the only guarantee of its victory, the guarantee of victory over all exploi-

tation, over all poverty and want! For there is enough bread, iron, timber, wool, cotton and flax in Russia to satisfy the needs of all, if only labour and its products are properly distributed, if only the *businesslike, practical* control of this distribution by the whole of the people is established, if only we can defeat the enemies of the people, the rich and their hangers on, and the rogues, the idlers and the hooligans, *not only* in politics, but also in *everyday economic* life

No mercy to these enemies of the people, the enemies of Socialism, the enemies of the toilers! War to the death on the rich and their hangers on, the bourgeois intellectuals, war on the rogues, the idlers and hooligans! Both, the former and the latter, are of the same brood—the spawn of capitalism, the offspring of aristocratic and bourgeois society, the society in which a handful of men robbed and insulted the people, the society in which poverty and want forced thousands and thousands into the path of hooliganism, corruption and roguery, and caused them to lose all resemblance to human beings, the society which inevitably cultivated in the toiler the desire to escape exploitation even by means of deception, to escape, *if only for a moment, from loathsome toil, to procure at least* a crust of bread by any possible means, at any cost, so as not to starve, so as to subdue the pangs of hunger suffered by himself and by his near ones

The rich and the rogues are two sides of the same medal, they are the two principal categories of *parasites* which capitalism fostered, they are the principal enemies of Socialism These enemies must be placed under the special surveillance of the whole people, they must be ruthlessly punished for the slightest violation of the laws and regulations of Socialist society Weakness, hesitation or sentimentality in this respect would be a great crime against Socialism

In order to render these parasites harmless to Socialist society we must organize the accounting and control of labour, production and distribution, to be carried out by the whole of the people, by millions and millions of workers and peasants, voluntarily, energetically and with revolutionary enthusiasm And in order to organize this accounting and control, which is *fully within the power* of every honest, intelligent and efficient worker and peasant, we must rouse their organizing talent, the talent which is in their midst, we must rouse among them—and organize on a nation wide scale—*competition* in the sphere of organizational successes, the workers and peasants must be got to see clearly the difference between the necessary advice of an educated man and the necessary control by the "common" worker and peasant of the *undisciplined habits* that are so habitual among the "educated"

These undisciplined habits, this carelessness, slovenliness, unpunctuality, nervous haste, the inclination to substitute discussion for action, talk for work, the inclination to undertake everything under the sun without finishing anything, is one of the characteristics of the "educated", and this is not due to the fact that they are bad by nature, still less is it

due to malice; it is due to their habits of life, the conditions of their work, to fatigue, to the abnormal separation of mental from manual labour, and so on, and so forth.

Among the mistakes, defects and omissions of our revolution a by no means unimportant role is played by the mistakes, etc., which are due to these deplorable—but at present inevitable—characteristics of the intellectuals in our midst, and to the *lack* of sufficient supervision by the *workers* over the *organizational* work of these intellectuals.

The workers and peasants are still "shy"; they must get rid of this shyness, and they *certainly* will get rid of it. We cannot dispense with the advice, the instruction of educated people, of intellectuals and specialists. Every sensible worker and peasant understands this perfectly well, and the intellectuals in our midst cannot complain of a lack of attention and comradely respect on the part of the workers and peasants. But advice and instruction is one thing, the organization of *practical* accounting and control is another thing. Very often the intellectuals give excellent advice and instruction, but they prove to be ridiculously, *absurdly*, shamefully "unhandy" and incapable of *carrying out* this advice and instruction, of exercising *practical control* over the transforming of words into deeds.

That is why it is utterly impossible to dispense with the help and the *leading role* of the practical organizers from among the "people," from among the workers and toiling peasants. "It is not the gods who make pots"—this is a motto that the workers and peasants should get well drilled into their minds. They must understand that the whole thing now is *practical work*; that the historical moment has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, is vitalized by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice; when the words of Marx, "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programs,"* become particularly true—every step in practically, really curbing, restricting, fully registering and supervising the rich and the rogues is worth a dozen excellent arguments about Socialism. For "theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life."**

Competition must be organized between the practical organizers from the workers and peasants. Every attempt to adhere to stereotyped forms and to impose uniformity from above as our intellectuals are so inclined to do, must be combated. Stereotyped forms and uniformity imposed from above have nothing in common with democratic and Socialist centralism. The unity of essentials, of fundamentals, of the essence, is not disturbed but ensured by *variety* in details, in specific local features, in methods of *approach*, in *methods* of exercising control, in *ways* of exterminating and rendering harmless the parasites (the rich and the rogues, slovenly and hysterical intellectuals, etc., etc.).

* *Cf.* Marx, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. II, p. 553.—*Ed.*

** The words quoted by Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*.—*Ed.*

The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine *initiative*, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with *voluntary centralism free from stereotyped forms* Our Soviets are *following* this example But they are still "shy," they have not yet got into their stride, have not yet "bitten into" their new, great, *creative task* of building the Socialist system The Soviets must set to work more boldly and display greater initiative Every 'commune," every factory, every village, every consumers' society, every committee of supplies, must *compete* with its neighbours as a practical organizer of accounting and control of labour and distribution The *program of this accounting and control* is simple, clear and intelligible to all, it is everyone to have bread, everyone to have sound footwear and good clothing, everyone to have warm dwellings, everyone to work conscientiously, not a single rogue (including those who shirk their work) should be allowed to be at liberty, but kept in prison, or put to compulsory labour of the hardest kind, not a single rich man who violates the laws and regulations of Socialism to be allowed to escape the fate of the rogue, which should, in justice, be the fate of the rich man "He who does not work, neither shall he eat' — this is the *practical* commandment of Socialism This is how things should be organized *practically* These are the *practical* successes our 'communes" and our worker and peasant organizers should be proud of And this applies *particularly* to the organizers among the intellectuals (because they are *too much, far too much* in the habit of being proud of their general instructions and resolutions)

Thousands of forms and methods of accounting and controlling the rich, the rogues and the idlers should be devised and put to a practical test by the communes themselves, by small units in town and country Variety is a guarantee of virility here, a guarantee of success in achieving the common aim—to *purge* the land of Russia of all vermin, of fleas—the rogues, of bugs—the rich, and so on and so forth In one place half a score of rich, a dozen rogues, half a dozen workers who shirk their work (in the hooligan manner in which many compositors in Petrograd, particularly in the Party printing offices, shirk their work) will be put in prison In another place they will be put to cleaning latrines In a third place they will be provided with 'yellow tickets" after they have served their time, so that all the people shall have them under their surveillance, as *pernicious* persons, until they reform In a fourth place, one out of every ten idlers will be shot on the spot In a fifth place mixed methods may be adopted, and by probational release, for example, the rich, the bourgeois intellectuals, the rogues and hooligans who are corrigible will be given an opportunity to reform quickly The more variety there will be, the better and richer will be our general experience, the more certain and rapid will be the success of Socialism, and the easier will it be for practice to devise—for only practice can devise—the *best* methods and means of struggle

In what commune, in what district of a large town, in what factory and in what village are there *no* starving people, *no* unemployed, *no* idle rich, *no* scoundrelly lackeys of the bourgeoisie, saboteurs who call themselves intellectuals? Where has most been done to raise the productivity of labour, to build good new houses for the poor, to put the poor in the houses of the rich, to regularly provide a bottle of milk for every child of every poor family? It is on these points that *competition* should be organized between the communes, communities, producers'-consumers' societies and associations, and Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. This is the work on which *organizing talent* should be singled out *in practice* and promoted in the administration of the state. There is a great deal of this talent among the people. It is merely suppressed. It must be given an opportunity to display itself. It, *and it alone*, with the support of the masses, can save Russia and save the cause of Socialism.

Written January 7-10, 1918
[December 25-28, 1917]

Published in the *Pravda* No. 17,
January 20, 1929

DRAFT DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE TOILING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE*

The Constituent Assembly resolves:

I

1 Russia is hereby proclaimed a republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies All power centrally and locally belongs to these Soviets

2 The Russian Soviet Republic shall be constituted on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

II

Making it its fundamental aim to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to put a complete end to the division of society into classes, mercilessly to crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a Socialist organization of society and to achieve the victory of Socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly further resolves

1 *Private ownership of land is hereby abolished All land together* with all structures, farm property, and other appurtenances of agricultural production, is proclaimed the property of the whole toiling people.

2 The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Council of National Economy are hereby confirmed with the object of guaranteeing

* The draft declaration was written by Lenin at the beginning of January 1918 Comrade Stalin, with Lenin's consent, introduced a number of amendments after which it served as the basis for the declaration of the All Russian Central Executive Committee announced by the latter at the meeting of the Constituent Assembly held on January 5 The counter revolutionaries who had secured a majority in the Constituent Assembly refused to discuss the declaration It was passed by the III All Russian Congress of Soviets on January 11, 1918 and was subsequently included as a component part of the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic adopted by the V All Russian Congress of Soviets on July 10, 1918 —*Ed*

the power of the toiling people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the mills, factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

3. The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the toiling masses from the yoke of capital.

4. With the object of abolishing the parasitic strata of society, universal labour service is hereby instituted.

5. In order to guarantee the sovereign power of the toiling masses, and in order to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the toilers, the creation of a Socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

III

1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Constituent Assembly wholeheartedly associates itself with the policy pursued by the Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organizing widespread fraternization among the workers and peasants of the warring armies, and achieving at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace between the nations, without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same purpose in view, the Constituent Assembly insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilization, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters of a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of toiling people in Asia, in the colonies in general and in small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland, commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia, and declaring freedom of self-determination for Armenia.

3. The Constituent Assembly regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the tsar, landlords and bourgeoisie as a first blow to international bank, finance capital, and expresses the conviction that the Soviet government will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

DRAFT DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE TOILING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE*

The Constituent Assembly resolves:

I

1 Russia is hereby proclaimed a republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies All power centrally and locally belongs to these Soviets

2 The Russian Soviet Republic shall be constituted on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

II

Making it its fundamental aim to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to put a complete end to the division of society into classes, mercilessly to crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a Socialist organization of society and to achieve the victory of Socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly further resolves

1 Private ownership of land is hereby abolished All land together with all structures, farm property, and other appurtenances of agricultural production, is proclaimed the property of the whole toiling people.

2 The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Council of National Economy are hereby confirmed with the object of guaranteeing

* The draft declaration was written by Lenin at the beginning of January 1918 Comrade Stalin, with Lenin's consent introduced a number of amendments after which *it served as the basis for the declaration of the All Russian* Central Executive Committee announced by the latter at the meeting of the Constituent Assembly held on January 5 The counter revolutionaries who had secured a majority in the Constituent Assembly refused to discuss the declaration It was passed by the III All Russian Congress of Soviets on January 11, 1918 and was subsequently included as a component part of the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic adopted by the V All Russian Congress of Soviets on *July 10, 1918 —Ed*

the power of the toiling people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the mills, factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

3. The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the toiling masses from the yoke of capital.

4. With the object of abolishing the parasitic strata of society, universal labour service is hereby instituted.

5. In order to guarantee the sovereign power of the toiling masses, and in order to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the toilers, the creation of a Socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

III

1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Constituent Assembly wholeheartedly associates itself with the policy pursued by the Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organizing widespread fraternization among the workers and peasants of the warring armies, and achieving at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace between the nations, without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same purpose in view, the Constituent Assembly insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilization, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters of a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of toiling people in Asia, in the colonies in general and in small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland, commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia, and declaring freedom of self-determination for Armenia.

3. The Constituent Assembly regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the tsar, landlords and bourgeoisie as a first blow to international bank, finance capital, and expresses the conviction that the Soviet government will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

IV

Having been elected on the basis of party lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, when the people were not yet in a position to rise in their mass against the exploiters, when they had not yet experienced the full strength of resistance of the latter in defence of their class privileges, and when they had not yet addressed themselves to the practical task of building a Socialist society, the Constituent Assembly considers that it would be fundamentally wrong, even from the formal point of view, to set itself up against the Soviet power.

And in actual fact, the Constituent Assembly considers that now, when the people are waging the last fight against their exploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any of the organs of government. The power must be vested wholly and entirely in the toiling masses and their authorized representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Supporting the Soviet power and the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars, the Constituent Assembly considers that its own task should be confined to establishing the fundamental principles of the Socialist reconstruction of society.

At the same time, endeavouring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore the more so firm and stable, union of the toiling classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly confines its own task to the establishment of the fundamental principles of a Federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Soviet Congress whether they shall participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

Pravda No. 2,
January 17 [4], 1918

DRAFT DECREE ON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY*

At its very inception, the Russian revolution gave rise to Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the mass organization of all the toiling and exploited classes and as the only organization capable of leading the struggle of these classes for their complete political and economic emancipation.

During the whole of the first period of the Russian revolution the Soviets multiplied in number, grew and gained in strength, were taught by their own experience to discard the illusions of compromise with the bourgeoisie and to realize the deceptive nature of the forms of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism, and arrived at the practical conclusion that the emancipation of the oppressed classes was impossible unless they broke with these forms and with every kind of compromise. Such a break was the October Revolution, which transferred the entire power to the Soviets.

The Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, was an expression of the old relation of political forces which existed when the compromisers and the Cadets were in power. When the people at that time voted for the candidates of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, they were not in a position to choose between the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the supporters of the bourgeoisie, and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the supporters of Socialism. Thus the Constituent Assembly, which was to have been the crown of the bourgeois parliamentary republic, could not but become an obstacle in the path of the October Revolution and the Soviet power.

The October Revolution, by handing over the power to the Soviets, and through the Soviets to the toiling and exploited classes, aroused the desperate resistance of the exploiters, and in the crushing of this resistance it fully revealed itself as the beginning of the Socialist revolution. The toiling classes learnt by experience that the old bourgeois parliamentarism had outlived its purpose and was entirely incompatible with the aim of achieving Socialism, and that not national institutions, but only class institutions (such as the Soviets), were capable of overcoming

* The draft was drawn up by Lenin on January 6, 1918 in collaboration with Comrade Stalin and was adopted the same day by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.—*Ed.*

the resistance of the propertied classes and of laying the foundations of a Socialist society. To relinquish the sovereign power of the Soviets, to relinquish the Soviet republic won by the people, for the sake of bourgeois parliamentarism and a Constituent Assembly, would now be a retrograde step and involve the complete collapse of the October workers' and peasants' revolution.

Owing to the circumstances mentioned above, the majority in the Constituent Assembly which met on January 5 was secured by the party of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the party of Kerensky, Avksentyev and Chernov. It was only natural that this party should have refused to discuss the *absolutely clear, precise and unambiguous proposal of* the supreme organ of Soviet power, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, to approve the program of the Soviet power, to approve the "Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People" and to recognize the October Revolution and the Soviet power. Thereby the Constituent Assembly severed all ties with the Soviet Republic of Russia. The withdrawal from such a Constituent Assembly of the fractions of the Bolsheviks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who now patently constitute the overwhelming majority in the Soviets and enjoy the confidence of the workers and the majority of the peasants, was inevitable.

The Right Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties are in fact carrying on outside the walls of the Constituent Assembly a most desperate struggle against the Soviet power, calling openly in their press for its overthrow and characterizing as arbitrary and unlawful the crushing of the resistance of the exploiters by the toiling classes, which is essential in the interests of emancipation from exploitation. They are supporting *the saboteurs, the servitors of capital, and are going to the length of undisguised* appeals for terrorism, which certain "unidentified groups" have already begun to practise.* It is obvious that under such circumstances the remaining part of the Constituent Assembly could only serve as a screen for the efforts of the counter revolutionaries to overthrow the Soviet power.

Accordingly, the Central Executive Committee resolves

The Constituent Assembly is hereby dissolved

Izvestia of the Central Executive Committee No 5,
January 7, 1918

---

* The previous part of this paragraph from the words "The Right Socialist Revolutionaries ' to ' have already begun to practise" was redrafted by Comrade Stalin as follows

"But outside the walls of the Constituent Assembly the party which constitutes a majority in the Constituent Assembly, the Right Socialist-Revolutionary Party is waging an open struggle against the Soviet power, appealing in its publications to overthrow the latter, supporting the resistance of the exploiters to the transfer of the land and factories to the working people, supporting *the saboteurs*, the servitors of capital, and are going to the length of undisguised appeals for terrorism, which certain unidentified groups have already begun to practise —*Ed*

THESES ON THE QUESTION OF IMMEDIATE CONCLUSION OF A SEPARATE AND ANNEXATIONIST PEACE

1. The position of the Russian revolution at the present moment is that nearly all the workers and the vast majority of the peasants are undoubtedly in favour of Soviet government and of the Socialist revolution which it has started. To that extent the Socialist revolution in Russia is assured.

2. At the same time, the civil war, provoked by the frantic resistance of the wealthy classes, who fully realize that they are faced with the last, decisive fight for the preservation of private ownership of the land and means of production, has not yet reached its climax. The victory of Soviet government in this war is assured, but some time must inevitably elapse, no little exertion of effort will inevitably be demanded, a certain period of acute economic disruption and chaos, such as attend all wars, and civil war in particular, is inevitable, before the resistance of the bourgeoisie is crushed.

3. Furthermore, this resistance, in its less active and non-military forms—sabotage, corruption of the declassed elements and of agents of the bourgeoisie, who worm their way into the ranks of the Socialists in order to ruin their cause, and so on and so forth—has proved so stubborn and capable of assuming such diversified forms, that the fight to counter it will inevitably still take some time, and, in its main forms, is scarcely likely to end before several months. And unless the passive and covert resistance of the bourgeoisie and its supporters is definitely crushed, the Socialist revolution cannot possibly succeed.

4. Lastly, the organizational problems of the Socialist reformation of Russia are so immense and difficult that their solution—in view of the abundance of petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers of the Socialist proletariat, and of the latter's low cultural level—will demand a fairly long time.

5. All these circumstances taken together are such as to make it perfectly clear that for the success of Socialism in Russia a certain amount of time, not less than several months at least, will be necessary, during which the hands of the Socialist government must be absolutely free for

the job of vanquishing the bourgeoisie in our own country first, and of arranging widespread and far-reaching mass organizational work.

6. The situation of the Socialist revolution in Russia must form the basis of any definition of the international tasks of our Soviet state, for the international situation in the fourth year of the war is such that it is quite impossible to calculate the probable moment of outbreak of revolution or overthrow of any of the European imperialist governments (including the German) That the Socialist revolution in Europe must come, and will come, is beyond doubt All our hopes for the *final* victory of *Socialism are founded on this* certainty and on this scientific prognosis. Our propagandist activities in general, and the organization of fraternization in particular, must be intensified and extended But it would be a mistake to base the tactics of the Russian Socialist government on an attempt to determine whether the European, and especially the German, Socialist revolution will take place in the next six months (or some such brief period), or not. Inasmuch as it is quite impossible to determine this, all such attempts, objectively speaking, would be nothing but a blind *gamble*

7. The peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk have by this date—January 7, 1918—made it perfectly clear that the upper hand in the German government (which leads the other governments of the quadruple alliance by the halter) has undoubtedly been gained by the military party, which has virtually already presented Russia with an ultimatum (and it is to be expected, most certainly to be expected, that any day now it will be presented formally) The ultimatum is as follows either the continuation *of the war, or an annexationist peace, i e, peace on condition* that we surrender all the territory we occupy, while the Germans retain *all* the territory they occupy and impose upon us an indemnity (outwardly disguised as payment for the maintenance of prisoners)—an indemnity of about three thousand million *rubles*, payable over a period of several years.

8 The Socialist government of Russia is faced with the question —a question which brooks no postponement—of whether to accept this annexationist peace now, or at once to wage a revolutionary war Actually speaking, no middle course is possible No further postponement is now feasible, for we have *already* done everything possible and impossible *artificially to protract the negotiations*

9 Examining the arguments in favour of an immediate revolutionary war, the first we encounter is the argument that a separate peace at this juncture would, objectively speaking, *be tantamount to an agreement* with the German imperialists, an "imperialistic deal," and so forth, and that, consequently, such a peace would be at complete variance with the fundamental principles of proletarian internationalism

But this argument is clearly incorrect Workers who lose a strike and sign terms for the resumption of work which are unfavourable to them

and favourable to the capitalists, do not betray Socialism. Only those betray Socialism who barter to secure advantages for a section of the workers in exchange for advantages to the capitalists; only such agreements are impermissible in principle.

Whoever calls a war with German imperialism a defensive and just war, but actually receives support from the Anglo-French imperialists, and conceals from the people secret treaties concluded with them, betrays Socialism. Whoever, without concealing anything from the people, and without concluding any secret treaties with the imperialists, agrees to terms of peace which are unfavourable to the weak nation and favourable to the imperialists of one group, if at the given moment he has no strength to continue the war, does not betray Socialism in the slightest degree.

10. Another argument in favour of immediate war is that, by concluding peace, we, objectively speaking, become agents of German imperialism, for we afford it the opportunity to release troops from our front, surrender to it millions of prisoners, and the like. But this argument too is clearly incorrect, for a revolutionary war at the present juncture would, objectively speaking, make us agents of Anglo-French imperialism, by providing it with forces which would promote its aims. The British bluntly offered our commander-in-chief, Krylenko, one hundred rubles per month for every one of our soldiers provided we continued the war. Even if we did not take a single kopek from the Anglo-French, we nevertheless would be helping them, objectively speaking, by diverting part of the German army.

From that point of view, in neither case would we be entirely escaping some sort of imperialist tie, and it is obvious that it is impossible to do so entirely without overthrowing world imperialism. The correct conclusion from this is that the moment a Socialist government triumphs in any one country, questions must be decided, not from the point of view of whether this or that imperialism is preferable, but exclusively from the point of view of the conditions which best make for the development and consolidation of the Socialist revolution which has already begun.

In other words, the underlying principle of our tactics must not be, which of the two imperialisms is it more profitable to aid at this juncture, but rather, how can the Socialist revolution be most surely and reliably ensured the possibility of consolidating itself, or, at least, of maintaining itself in one country until it is joined by other countries.

11. It is said that the German Social-Democratic opponents of the war have now become "defeatists" and are requesting us not to yield to German imperialism. But we recognized defeatism only in respect to *one's own* imperialist bourgeoisie, and we always discountenanced victory over an alien imperialism, victory attained in formal or actual alliance with a "friendly" imperialism, as a method impermissible in principle and generally obnoxious.

This argument is therefore only a modification of the previous one If the German Left Social Democrats were proposing that we delay concluding a separate peace for a *definite* period, and guaranteed revolutionary action in Germany in this period, the question *might* assume a different aspect for us But far from saying this, the German Lefts formally declare "Stick it out as long as you can, but decide the question from the standpoint of the state of affairs in the *Russian* Socialist revolution, for we cannot promise you anything positive regarding the German revolution "

12 It is said that in a number of party statements we positively "promised" a revolutionary war, and that by concluding a separate peace we would be going back on our word

That is not true We said that in the era of imperialism it was *necessary* for a Socialist government to "*prepare for and wage*" a revolutionary war, we said this as a means of countering abstract pacifism and the theory that "defense of the fatherland" must be completely rejected in the era of imperialism, and, lastly, as a means of countering the purely egoistical instincts of a part of the soldiery, but we never gave any pledge to start a revolutionary war without taking account of how far it is possible to wage it at any given moment

Unquestionably, even at this juncture we must *prepare* for a revolutionary war We are carrying out this promise, as we have, in general, carried out all our promises that could be carried out at once we annulled the secret treaties, offered all nations a fair peace, and several times did our best to drag out peace negotiations so as to give other nations a chance to join us

But the question whether it is possible to wage a revolutionary war *now and at once* must be decided exclusively from the standpoint of whether material conditions permit it, and of the interests of the Socialist revolution which has already begun

13 Having weighed up the arguments in favour of an immediate revolutionary war, we are forced to the conclusion that such a policy might perhaps answer the human yearning for the beautiful, dramatic and striking, but that it would absolutely ignore the objective relation of class forces and material factors in the present stage of the Socialist revolution which has begun

14 There can be no doubt but that our army is absolutely in no condition at the present moment, and will not be for the next few weeks (and probably for the next few months), to resist a German offensive successfully, firstly, owing to the extreme fatigue and exhaustion of the majority of the soldiers, coupled with the incredible chaos in the matter of victualling, replacement of the overfatigued, etc , secondly, owing to the utter unfitness of our horses, which would doom our artillery to inevitable destruction and, thirdly, owing to the utter impossibility of defending the coast from Riga to Revel, which affords the enemy a certain chance of conquering the rest of Livonia, and then Esthonia, and of

outflanking a large part of our forces, and lastly, of capturing Petrograd.

15. Further, there is not the slightest doubt that the peasant majority of our army would at the present juncture unreservedly declare in favour of an annexationist peace, and not of an immediate revolutionary war; for the Socialist reorganization of the army, the merging of the Red Guard detachments with it, and the like, have only just begun.

With the army completely democratized, to wage war in defiance of the wishes of the majority of the soldiers would be sheer recklessness, while to create a really staunch and ideologically-strong Socialist workers' and peasants' army will require months and months, at least.

16. The poor peasants in Russia are capable of supporting a Socialist revolution led by the working class, but they are not capable of a serious revolutionary war immediately, at the present juncture. To ignore this objective relation of class forces in the present instance would be a fatal error.

17. Consequently, the situation at present in regard to a revolutionary war is as follows:

If the German revolution were to break out and triumph in the coming three or four months, the tactics of an immediate revolutionary war might perhaps not ruin our Socialist revolution.

If, however, the German revolution does not eventuate in the next few months, the course of events, if the war is continued, will inevitably be such that a smashing defeat will compel Russia to conclude a far more disadvantageous separate peace, a peace, moreover, which would be concluded, not by a Socialist government, but by some other (for example, a bloc of the bourgeois Rada and the Chernovites, or something similar.) For the peasant army, which is unendurably exhausted by the war, will, after the first defeats—and very likely within a matter, not of months but of weeks—overthrow the Socialist workers' government.

18. Such being the state of affairs, it would be absolutely impermissible tactics to stake the fate of the Socialist revolution which has begun in Russia merely on the chance that the German revolution may begin in the immediate future, within a period measurable in weeks. Such tactics would be a reckless gamble. We have no right to take such risks.

19. And the German revolution will not be jeopardized, as far as its objective foundations are concerned, if we conclude a separate peace. Probably the chauvinist intoxication will weaken it for a time, but Germany's position will remain extremely grave, the war with Britain and America will be a protracted one, and the aggressive imperialism of both sides has been fully and completely exposed. A Socialist Soviet Republic in Russia will stand as a living example to the peoples of all countries, and the propaganda and revolutionizing effect of this example will be immense. There—the bourgeois system and an absolutely naked

war of aggrandizement of two groups of marauders. Here—peace and a Socialist Soviet Republic.

20. In concluding a separate peace we free ourselves *as much as is possible at the present moment* from both hostile imperialist groups, we take advantage of their mutual enmity and warfare—which hamper concerted action on their part against us—and for a certain period have our hands free to advance and consolidate the Socialist revolution. The reorganization of Russia on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the nationalization of the banks and large scale industry, coupled with exchange of products in kind between the towns and the small peasants-consumers' societies, is economically quite feasible, provided we are assured a few months in which to work in peace. And such a reorganization will render Socialism invincible both in Russia and all over the world, and at the same time will create a solid economic basis for a mighty workers' and peasants' Red Army.

21. A really revolutionary war at this juncture would mean a war waged by a Socialist republic on the bourgeois countries, with the aim—an aim clearly defined and fully approved by the Socialist army—of overthrowing the bourgeoisie in other countries. However, we *obviously* cannot set ourselves this aim at the *given* moment Objectively, we would be fighting now for the liberation of Poland, Lithuania and Courland. But no Marxist, without flying in the face of the principles of Marxism and of Socialism generally, can deny that the interests of Socialism are higher than the interests of the right of nations to self-determination. Our Socialist republic has done all it could, and continues to do all it can to give effect to the right to self determination of Finland, the Ukraine, etc But if the concrete position of affairs is such that the existence of the Socialist republic is being imperiled at the present moment on account of the violation of the right to self-determination of several nations (Poland, Lithuania, Courland, etc), naturally the preservation of the Socialist republic has the higher claim

Consequently, whoever says, "We cannot sign a shameful, indecent, etc , peace, betray Poland, and so forth," fails to observe that by concluding peace on condition that Poland is liberated, he would only *still further* be strengthening German imperialism against England, Belgium, Serbia and other countries Peace on condition of the liberation of Poland, Lithuania and Courland would be a "patriotic" peace *from the point of view of Russia*, but would none the less be a peace with the *annexationists*, with the German imperialists

Written January 20 [7], 1918
First printed in *Pravda* No 34,
February 24, 1918

THE SOCIALIST FATHERLAND IS IN DANGER!

February 21, 1918

In order to save our exhausted and tormented country from new ordeals of war we decided to make a great sacrifice and signified our readiness to the Germans to sign their terms of peace. Our parliamentaires left Rezhitsa for Dvinsk on the evening of February 20 [7], and there is no reply yet. The German government is evidently in no hurry to reply. It obviously does not want peace. In pursuance of the behest of the capitalists of all countries, German militarism wants to strangle the Russian and Ukrainian workers and peasants, to return the land to the landlords, the mills and factories to the bankers, and the power to the monarchy. The German generals want to establish their "order" in Petrograd and Kiev. The Socialist Soviet Republic is in gravest danger. Until the proletariat of Germany rises and triumphs, it is the sacred duty of the workers and peasants of Russia supremely to defend the Soviet Republic against the hordes of bourgeois-imperialist Germany.

The Council of People's Commissars resolves: 1) All the forces and means of the country shall be placed entirely at the disposal of revolutionary defence. 2) All Soviets and revolutionary organizations are ordered to defend every position to the last drop of blood. 3) Railway organizations and their associated soviets must by every means in their power prevent the enemy from availing himself of the machinery of communications: in the event of a retreat, they are to destroy the tracks and blow up or burn down the railway buildings; all rolling stock—cars and locomotives—are to be immediately dispatched eastward, into the interior of the country. 4) All grain and food stocks generally, as well as all valuable property in danger of falling into the enemy's hands must be absolutely destroyed; the duty of seeing that this is done is laid upon the local Soviets under the personal responsibility of their chairmen. 5) It is up to the workers and peasants of Petrograd, Kiev, and of all towns, townships, hamlets and villages along the line of the new front to mobilize battalions to dig trenches, under the direction of military experts. 6) These battalions should include all able-bodied members of the bourgeois class, men and women, under the supervision of Red Guards, those who resist

to be shot. 7) All publications which militate against the cause of revolutionary defence and side with the German bourgeoisie, or which endeavour to take advantage of the incursion of the imperialist hordes in order to overthrow Soviet rule must be closed down, able bodied editors and members of the staffs of such publications are to be mobilized for the digging of trenches or for other defence work. 8) Enemy agents, profiteers, marauders, hooligans, counter-revolutionary agitators and German spies, are to be summarily shot.

The Socialist Fatherland is in danger! Long live the Socialist Fatherland! Long live the international Socialist revolution!

Council of People's Commissars

Printed in 1934 in
V I Lenin *From the Epoch of the Civil War*

STRANGE AND MONSTROUS

The Moscow Regional Bureau of our Party, in a resolution adopted February 24, 1918, expressed lack of confidence in the Central Committee, refused to obey such of its decisions "as are connected with the carrying out of the provisions of the peace treaty with Austria and Germany," and, in an "explanatory comment" to the resolution, declared that it "considers a split in the Party in the very near future scarcely avoidable."*

There is nothing monstrous, nor even strange in all this. It is quite natural that comrades who drastically disagree with the Central Committee over the question of a separate peace should drastically condemn the Central Committee and express their conviction that a split is inevitable. That is most certainly the legitimate right of Party members, and is quite understandable.

But here is what is strange and monstrous. An "explanatory comment" is annexed to the resolution. Here it is in full:

> "The Moscow Regional Bureau considers a split in the Party in the very near future scarcely avoidable and it sets itself the aim of uniting all consistent revolutionary-Communist elements who equally oppose both advocates of the conclusion of a separate peace and all moderate, opportunist elements in the Party. *In the interests of the international revolution, we consider it expedient to consent to the possible loss of the Soviet power, which has now become purely formal.* We continue to hold that our primary task is to extend the idea of the Socialist revolution to all countries, resolutely to promote the workers' dictatorship, and ruthlessly to suppress bourgeois counter-revolution in Russia."

---

* Here is the full text of the resolution: "Having discussed the activities of the Central Committee, the Moscow Regional Bureau of the R.S.D.L.P. expresses its lack of confidence in the Central Committee owing to its political line and composition, and will at the first opportunity insist that a new central committee be elected. Furthermore, the Moscow Regional Bureau does not consider itself bound unreservedly to obey such decisions of the Central Committee as are connected with the carrying out of the provisions of the peace treaty with Austria and Germany." The resolution was adopted unanimously.

It is the words we have underscored in this passage which are—strange and monstrous.

It is in these words that the crux of the matter lies.

These words reduce the whole line of the authors of the resolution to an absurdity. These words expose with unusual clarity the root of their error.

"In the interests of the international revolution it is expedient to consent to the possible loss of the Soviet power. . . ." That is strange, for the premises and the conclusion are not even connected. "In the interests of the international revolution it is expedient to consent to the *military defeat* of the Soviet power"—such a thesis might be right or wrong, but it could not be called strange. That is the first thing.

Second thing: the Soviet power "has now become purely formal." Now this is not only strange but downright monstrous. Obviously, the authors have got themselves thoroughly entangled. We shall have to disentangle them.

As regards the first question, the idea of the authors evidently is that it would be expedient in the interests of the international revolution to consent to possible defeat in war, which would lead to the loss of the Soviet power, in other words, to the triumph of the bourgeoisie in Russia. By expressing this thought the authors indirectly admit the justice of what I said in the theses (of January 7, 1918, published in the *Pravda* of February 24, 1918), namely, that refusal to accept the terms of peace presented by Germany would lead to the defeat of Russia and the overthrow of the Soviet power.

And so, *la raison finit toujours par avoir raison*—the truth always triumphs! My "extreme" opponents, the Moscovites who threaten a split—were obliged—just because they openly talk of a split—bluntly to state their *concrete* views, which is what people who confine themselves to general phrasemongering about revolutionary war prefer to avoid doing. The whole point of my theses and arguments (as anyone who takes the trouble carefully to read my theses of January 7, 1918, may see) is that we must accept this ultra-severe peace *now*, at once, while at the same time seriously *preparing* for a revolutionary war (and accept it, *moreover*, precisely *in the interest* of such serious preparations). Those who confined themselves to general phrasemongering about a revolutionary war ignored or failed to notice, or did not want to notice, the very essence of my arguments. And now I must thank precisely my "extreme" opponents, the Moscovites, from the bottom of my heart for having broken the "conspiracy of silence" over the *essence* of my arguments. The Moscovites were *the first* to reply to them.

And what was their reply?

Their reply was an *admission of the correctness* of my *concrete* argument. Yes, the Moscovites admitted that we should indeed be defeated

if we gave the Germans battle now.* Yes, this defeat would indeed lead to the overthrow of the Soviet power.

Once again I thank my "extremist" opponents, the Moscovites, from the bottom of my heart for having broken the "conspiracy of silence" against the gist of my arguments, *i.e.*, against my *concrete* statement as to what would be the conditions of war, if we were to accept it at once, and for having fearlessly admitted the correctness of this concrete statement.

Further, on what grounds were my arguments, the correctness of which the Moscovites were compelled to admit, rejected?

On the grounds that in the interests of the international revolution *we must be prepared to consent* to the loss of the Soviet power.

Why should the interests of the international revolution demand that? This is the crux of the matter; it is the very essence of the argumentation for those who would reject my arguments. And precisely on this, the most important, fundamental and vital point, not a syllable is said either in the resolution or in the explanatory comment. The authors of the resolution found time and space to speak of what is generally known and indisputable—of "ruthlessly suppressing bourgeois counter-revolution in Russia" (with the methods and means of a policy which would lead to the loss of the Soviet power?), and of opposing all moderate, opportunist elements in the Party—but of that which is disputable and which concerns the essence of the position of the opponents of peace—not a word!

Strange. Extremely strange. Were the authors of the resolution silent about this because they felt that on this point they were particularly weak? To have plainly stated *why* (this is demanded by the interests of the international revolution) would most likely have meant exposing themselves. . . .

However that may be, we have to *seek* for the arguments which *may* have guided the authors of the resolution.

Maybe the authors believe that the interests of the international revolution forbid making any peace at all with imperialists? This opinion was expressed by some of the opponents of peace at one of the Petrograd meetings, but only an insignificant minority of those who objected to a separate peace supported it. It is clear that this opinion would lead to a denial of the expediency of the Brest negotiations and to a rejection of peace, "even" if accompanied by the restoration of Poland, Latvia and Courland. The unsoundness of this view (which was rejected, for

* As to the counter-argument, that to decline battle was equally impossible, the reply has been given by the facts: On January 8 my theses were read; by January 15 we *might* have had peace. A respite would have been certainly assured (and for us even the briefest respite would have been of gigantic significance, both materially and morally, for the *Germans* would have had to proclaim a *new* war), if—if it had not been for revolutionary phrasemongering.

example, by a majority of the Petrograd opponents of peace) strikes the eye. A Socialist republic surrounded by imperialist powers could not, from this viewpoint, conclude any economic treaties, and could not exist at all, without flying to the moon.

Maybe the authors believe that the world revolution needs *jogging*, and that it can be jogged only by war—and in no case by peace, which might give the masses the impression that imperialism was being "legitimatized"? Such a "theory" would be completely at variance with Marxism, which has always been opposed to "jogging" revolutions, which develop as the acuteness of the class antagonisms that engender revolutions ripen. Such a theory would be tantamount to the view that armed uprising is a form of struggle which is indispensable under all conditions Actually, however, the interests of the international revolution demand that the Soviet power, having overthrown the bourgeoisie in our country, should *help* that revolution, but that it should choose a *form* of help which is commensurate with its own strength. To help the Socialist revolution internationally by consenting to the possible defeat of that revolution in *one's own* country is a view that does not follow even from the jogging theory.

Maybe the authors of the resolution believe that revolution has already begun in Germany and has already reached the stage of an open nation-wide civil war, that we must therefore lend our efforts to helping the German workers, and must perish ourselves ("loss of the Soviet power") to *save* a German revolution which has already started its decisive fight and is being hard pressed? According to this theory, we, while perishing ourselves, would be diverting part of the forces of German counter-revolution, thus saving the German revolution.

It is quite conceivable that, given these premises, it would not only be "expedient" (as the authors of the resolution put it) but a downright *duty* to consent to the possible defeat and the possible loss of the Soviet power But obviously these premises do not exist. The German revolution is ripening, but it has manifestly not reached the stage of an eruption in Germany, of civil war in Germany. By "consenting to the possible loss of the Soviet power," we clearly would not be helping, but *hindering* the ripening of the German revolution We would be helping German reaction, playing into its hands, hampering the Socialist movement in Germany and repelling from Socialism large masses of German proletarians and semi proletarians who have not yet come over to Socialism and would be scared by the defeat of Soviet Russia, just as the English workers were scared by the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871.

Twist and turn them as you like, you will find no logic in the authors' contentions. There are no rational arguments to support the view that "in the interests of the international revolution it is expedient to consent to the possible loss of the Soviet power."

"The Soviet power has now become purely formal"—such, as we see,

is the monstrous view the authors of the Moscow resolution have gone so far as to proclaim.

Since the German imperialists are going to levy tribute on us and forbid us to carry on propaganda and agitation against Germany, the Soviet power loses all significance and "becomes purely formal," is probably the line of "thought" of the authors of the resolution. We say "probably," for the authors offer nothing clear and specific in support of their thesis.

Profound and hopeless pessimism and complete despair—such is the sum and substance of the "theory" that the significance of the Soviet power is purely formal and that tactics which will risk the possible loss of the Soviet power are permissible. Since there is no salvation anyway, then let even the Soviet power perish—such is the sentiment that dictated this monstrous resolution. The allegedly "economic" arguments in which such thoughts are sometimes enveloped reveal the same hopeless pessimism: what sort of Soviet republic is it—the implication is—when such-and-such tribute, such-and-such tribute, and such-and-such tribute can be extorted from it?

Nothing but despair: we shall perish, anyhow—so what's the use?

It is a quite understandable mood in the extremely drastic situation in which Russia finds herself. But it is not "understandable" among enlightened revolutionaries. It is significant merely of the views of the Moscovites, which have been carried to the point of absurdity. The Frenchmen of 1793 would never have said that their conquests—the republic and democracy—were becoming purely formal and that they would have to consent to the possible loss of the republic. They were not filled with despair, but with faith in victory. To call for a revolutionary war, and at the same time to talk in an official resolution of "consenting to the possible loss of the Soviet power" is to expose oneself completely and absolutely.

Early in the nineteenth century, at the time of the Napoleonic wars, Prussia and a number of other countries suffered incomparably and immeasurably greater hardships and burdens of defeat, subjugation, humiliation and oppression on the part of the conqueror than Russia is suffering in 1918. Yet the best men of Prussia, when Napoleon's military jackboot trampled upon them a hundred times more heavily than we can be trampled upon now, did not despair, and did not say that their national political institutions were "purely formal." They did not drop their hands or yield to the feeling: "It's all up with us, anyhow." They signed peace treaties infinitely more drastic, brutal, ignominious and oppressive than the Brest treaty, and then knew how to bide their time; they staunchly bore the conqueror's yoke, fought again, fell under the conqueror's yoke again, again signed the vilest of vile peace treaties, and again rose, and *in the end liberated themselves* (not without exploiting the dissensions among stronger competing conquerors).

Why should this not be repeated in our history?

Why should we give way to despair and write resolutions—which, by heavens, are more shameful than the most shameful peace—saying that the "Soviet power has become purely formal"?

Why should not drastic military defeats in the struggle against the giants of modern imperialism steel the national character in Russia too, strengthen self discipline, put an end to braggartry and phrasemongering, teach fortitude, and bring the masses round to the correct tactics of the Prussians when they were trampled upon by Napoleon—the tactics, namely, of signing the most ignominious of peace treaties when you haven't an army, then mustering your forces and rising again and again?

Why should we give way to despair at the first peace treaty, incredibly rigorous though it be, when other nations were able staunchly to bear *even bitterer misfortunes?*

Is it the staunchness of the proletarian who knows that one must submit *when the strength is lacking*, and is then able, *in spite of every*thing, to rise again and again and to build up strength under *all* circumstances, that corresponds to these tactics of despair, or, rather the spinelessness of the petty bourgeois, who in our country, in the shape of the Left Socialist Revolutionary Party, has beaten the record for phrasemongering about a revolutionary war?

No, dear Moscow "extremists," every day of trial will repel from you the most class conscious and staunchest of the workers The Soviet power, they will say, is not *becoming*, and will not *become* purely formal, and not only now, when the conqueror is in Pskov and is levying a ten thousand million ruble tribute in grain, ore and money, but even if he gets as far as Nizhni Novgorod and Rostov on Don and levies a tribute of *twenty* thousand million rubles

Never will any foreign conquest convert a popular *political institution* into a "sheer formality" (and the Soviet power is *something more than a political institution* which is far and away superior to anything known to history) On the contrary, alien conquest will only strengthen the popular sympathy for the Soviet power, provided—provided it does not indulge in reckless follies

And to refuse to sign even the vilest peace when you have no army would be a reckless folly, for which the people would be justified in condemning the government that refused to do so

Immeasurably more drastic and ignominious peace treaties than the Brest treaty have been signed before in history (we gave some instances above) without discrediting the regime or *turning it into a formality*, they *ruined neither* the regime nor the people, but rather steeled the people, *taught* them the *stern and difficult science* of building up a formidable army even in the most desperate conditions and under the heel of the conqueror's jackboot

Russia is making for a new and genuine patriotic war, a war for the preservation and consolidation of the Soviet power. It is possible that another epoch will—like the epoch of the Napoleonic wars—be an epoch of *wars* of liberation (not one war, but wars) imposed by conquerors upon Soviet Russia. That is possible.

And, therefore, more ignominious than any rigorous or ultra-rigorous peace, rendered unavoidable owing to the lack of an army—more ignominious than any ignominious peace is ignominious despair. We will not perish even from a dozen ultra-rigorous peace treaties if we take revolt and war *seriously*. No conquerors can ruin us if we do not ruin ourselves by despair and phrasemongering.

Pravda Nos. 37 and 38,
February 28 and March 1, 1918

ON A BUSINESSLIKE BASIS

The treacherous assault of the German Whiteguards on the Russian revolution has called forth an outburst of revolutionary enthusiasm. Telegrams are pouring in from everywhere expressing readiness to rise in defence of the Soviet government and to fight to the last man No other attitude towards their own workers' and peasants' government could have been expected.

But enthusiasm alone is not enough for the conduct of war against such an adversary as German imperialism. A frivolous attitude towards this *real*, *stubborn* and *bloody* war, would be the sheerest naivite, not to say a crime.

War must be waged in earnest, or not waged at all There can be no middle course. Since the German imperialists have forced it upon us, it is our sacred duty soberly to weigh our situation, calculate our forces and check up the business machinery. All this must be done at war time speed, for any procrastination, in our present situation, would be truly "like unto death." Hannibal is at the gates—that we must not forget for a single minute.

To wage the war *in earnest* we need a strong and organized rear Even the best of armies, even people most sincerely devoted to the revolutionary cause will be immediately exterminated by the enemy, if they are not adequately armed, are not supplied with food and are untrained That is so obvious as to need no explanation.

What is the state of the rear of our revolutionary army? Most deplorable, to say the least of it. The preceding war has definitely disrupted our railways, exchange between town and countryside has broken down, and the direct and immediate result of this is famine in the large cities.

Our army is being radically reorganized, under the blows of the enemy. The old army, which was familiar with modern conditions of warfare, no longer exists Thoroughly worn out by the preceding war, and mortally fatigued after three and a half years in the trenches, from the military standpoint it is a nonentity. The Red Army is undoubtedly splendid fighting material, but raw and unfinished material. In order that it may not become cannon fodder for the German guns, it must be trained and disciplined.

Colossal difficulties confront us. All local Soviets must immediately, following upon their telegrams announcing readiness to fight the foreign foe, report how many carloads of grain they have dispatched to Petrograd, what number of troops they are in a position to send to the front immediately, and how many Red Armymen are undergoing training. Stock must be taken of all arms and shells, and the production of new arms and shells must be resumed immediately. The railways must be cleared of bag-traders* and hooligans. The strictest revolutionary discipline must be restored everywhere. Only if *all* these conditions are observed can we talk of war *seriously*. Otherwise, all the talk about the "most revolutionary of wars" will be *phrasemongering*. And phrasemongering, which is always harmful, may at this critical juncture play a fatal role.

I am profoundly convinced that our revolution will cope with the colossal difficulties of the moment. It has already performed an immense work, but if our cause is to be successfully accomplished we must multiply our efforts.

Only then shall we win.

Pravda No. 38,
March 1, 1918

* *Bag-traders*—the term applied to petty profiteers during the Civil War (1918-20) in Russia who smuggled bags of foodstuffs to needy districts with the intent of charging exorbitant prices.—*Ed.*

A SERIOUS LESSON AND A SERIOUS RESPONSIBILITY

Our pseudo "Lefts," who yesterday brought out their own paper, the *Kommunist** (Communist of the pre Marxian era, one should add), are trying to evade the lesson and lessons of history, are trying to wriggle out of responsibility

But they wriggle in vain They will *not* succeed in wriggling out of it

The wrigglers are trying their hardest, are filling countless newspaper columns, are toiling in the sweat of their brows, are not sparing 'even" printer's ink to represent the "theory" of "respite" as unfounded and unsound

Alas, their efforts are powerless to refute the facts Facts are stubborn things, as the English proverb rightly says It is a fact that from March 3, when at 1 p m the Germans ceased hostilities, to March 5, at 7 p m, when I am writing these lines, we have had a respite, and we have *already* made use of these two days for the *businesslike* (as expressed in deeds, not phrasemongering) defence of the Socialist fatherland This is a fact which will become more evident to the masses every day It is a fact that at a moment when the army at the front, being in no condition to fight, is fleeing in panic, discarding its guns and not even stopping to blow up bridges, the defence of the fatherland and the *raising* of its defensive power lie not in prating about a revolutionary war (to prate in the face of this panic flight of the army—*not one* detachment of which was *restrained* by the advocates of revolutionary war—is downright shameful), but in retreating in good order, so as to save the remnants of the army, taking advantage of every day s respite for this purpose

Facts are stubborn things

Our pseudo Lefts,' in their efforts to evade the facts, the lessons to be derived from them and the question of responsibility, are endeavouring *to conceal* from their readers the recent, quite fresh and historically important past, and *to gloss it over* by dilating upon the distant and inessential past For example, K Radek in his article recalls that he wrote about the necessity of helping the army to stand firm in Decem

* *Kommunist*—factional organ of the Left Communists published in Petrograd between March 5 and 19, 1918 —*Ed*

ber (December, mind you!), in a "memorandum to the Council of People's Commissars." I have not had the opportunity to read this memorandum and I ask myself: why does not Karl Radek print it *in full*? Why does he not explain plainly and frankly what exactly he meant then by a "compromise peace"? Why does he not recall the more recent past, when he wrote in *Pravda* about his illusion (the worst of all illusions) that peace could be concluded with the German imperialists on condition of the restoration of Poland?

Why?

Because the pseudo-"Lefts" are compelled to gloss over facts which disclose *their*, the "Lefts'," responsibility for sowing illusions which actually *helped* the German imperialists and *hindered* the growth and development of the revolution in Germany.

N. Bukharin is even attempting now to deny the fact that he and his friends asserted that it was impossible for the Germans to attack. But very, very many know that it is a fact, that Bukharin and his friends did assert this, that by sowing such an illusion they *helped* German imperialism and *hindered* the growth of the German revolution, which has now been weakened by the fact that the Great-Russian Soviet Republic, owing to the panic flight of the peasant army, has been deprived of thousands upon thousands of guns and of wealth to the value of hundreds upon hundreds of millions. I foretold this definitely and clearly in my theses of January 7. If N. Bukharin is now compelled to "eat his words," all the worse for him. All who remember that Bukharin and his friends said that it was impossible for the Germans to attack, will only shrug their shoulders now that N. Bukharin is compelled to "wriggle" out of his own words.

And for the benefit of those who do not remember it, of those who did not hear it, let us refer to a document which is *now* a little more valuable, interesting and instructive than what K. Radek wrote in December. This document, which unfortunately is being concealed by the "Lefts" from their readers, is the record (1) of the vote on January 21, 1918, at the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party with the present "Left" opposition, and (2) of the vote in the Central Committee on February 17, 1918.

On January 21, 1918, on the question, whether to break off negotiations with the Germans immediately, Stukov alone (of the contributors to the pseudo-"Left" *Kommunist*) voted *in favour*. All the rest voted against.

On the question, whether it was *permissible* to sign an annexationist peace if the Germans should break off negotiations or present an ultimatum, only Obolensky (when will "his" theses be published? Why is the *Kommunist* silent about them?) and Stukov voted *against*. All the rest voted *in favour*.

On the question whether the peace submitted *should* be signed, only Obolensky and Stukov voted *against*. The rest of the "Lefts" *refrained from voting!!* That is a fact.

On February 17, 1918, when the question put was. who is in favour of a revolutionary war?—Bukharin and Lomov "refused to vote on the question as put." None voted *in favour*. That is a fact!

On the question, whether to "refrain from resuming peace negotiations until the German attack became sufficiently (*sic!*) evident and its influence upon the German working-class movement became clear," Bukharin, Lomov and Uritsky, of the *present contributors to the* "Left" paper, voted *in favour*.

On the question, "should we conclude peace if a German attack becomes a fact and a revolutionary upsurge fails to eventuate in Germany and Austria?"—Lomov, Bukharin and Uritsky *refrained from voting*.

Facts are stubborn things. And the facts show that Bukharin denied the possibility of a German attack and sowed illusions which *actually*, against his own wishes, *helped* the German imperialists and *hindered* the growth of the German revolution That indeed is the essence of revolutionary phrasemongering. You go one place and find yourself in another.

N. Bukharin rebukes me for not giving a concrete analysis of the terms of the present peace. But it should not be difficult to understand that from the point of view of my argument there was, and is actually no necessity for that. It was enough to show that we had only one real (not imagined) alternative either to accept *such* terms as would afford us a respite for a few days at least, or the position of Belgium and Serbia And this Bukharin did *not* refute, even for Petrograd That his colleague, M N Pokrovsky, admitted

And if the new terms are worse, more distressful and humiliating than the bad, distressful and humiliating Brest terms, it is *our pseudo "Lefts,"* Bukharin, Lomov, Uritsky and Co., who are *guilty of that* towards the great Russian Soviet Republic This is a historical fact, as is proved by the voting cited above It is a fact you cannot escape, wriggle as you will You were *offered* the Brest terms, and you replied by blustering and swaggering, which *led* to worse terms That is a fact And you cannot escape the responsibility for it

In my theses of January 7, 1918, it was foretold with the utmost clarity that in view of the state of our army (which could not be changed by phrasemongering *"against"* the tired peasant masses), Russia *would have* to conclude a *worse* separate peace, if she did not accept the Brest peace

The "Lefts" fell into the trap set by the Russian bourgeoisie, who *had* to embroil us in a war which would be the *most* unfavourable for us.

That the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries," in declaring for war *now*, were obviously at variance with the peasantry, is a fact. And this fact

peaks for the *frivolity* of the policy of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, ıst as the seemingly "revolutionary" policy of all the Socialist-Revolu- ionaries in the summer of 1917 was frivolous.

That the more intelligent and advanced workers are quickly shaking ff the fumes of revolutionary phrasemongering is attested by the example f Petrograd and Moscow. In Petrograd the best of the workers' districts— 'yborg and Vasilyeostrovsky—have sobered up. The Petrograd Soviet f Workers' Deputies is not in favour of war *now*; they have understood hat it is necessary to *prepare* for it, and are preparing for it. In Moscow, t the Bolshevik city conference on March 3 and 4, 1918, the opponents f revolutionary phrasemongering gained the upper hand.

To what monstrous lengths of self-deception our "Lefts" have gone is vident from one sentence in Pokrovsky's article, which says: "If we are o fight, we must fight *now*" (Pokrovsky's italics), "when" (listen to this!) 'our Russian army, including the newly-formed units, has still not been lemobilized."

But everybody who does not shut his eyes to the facts knows that the ;reatest hindrance to resisting the Germans in February 1918, whether in Great Russia, the Ukraine or Finland, was *our un-demobilized army*. That is a fact. For it could not do otherwise but flee in panic, carrying the Red Army detachments along with it.

Whoever wants to learn from the lessons of history, and not to hide from responsibility for them, or close his eyes to them, let him recall the war of Napoleon I with Germany.

Many a time did Prussia and Germany conclude with the conqueror peace treaties *ten times* more distressful and humiliating (than ours), even to the extent of accepting a foreign police, even to the extent of undertaking to furnish troops to help Napoleon I in his campaigns of conquest. Napoleon I in his treaties harassed and dismembered Germany ten times worse than Hindenburg and Wilhelm have crushed us now. Yet there were people to be found in Prussia who did not bluster, but signed ultra-"shameful" peace treaties, signed them because they had no army, signed terms ten times more oppressive and humiliating, and then *in spite of everything* rose up in revolt and to wage war. That happened not once, but many times. History knows of several such peace treaties and wars. Of several cases of respite. Of several new declarations of war on conquerors. Of several cases of an alliance between an oppressed nation and oppressing nation, which was a rival of the conqueror and no less a conqueror itself (be it marked by the advocates of a "revolutionary war" *without* accepting aid from imperialists!).

Such was the course of history.

So it was. So it will be. We have entered a period of a *series* of wars. We are moving towards a new *patriotic* war. We will arrive at that war in the midst of a ripening Socialist revolution. And while on that difficult road the Russian proletariat and the Russian revolution will know

how to cure themselves of blustering and revolutionary phraseology, will know how to accept even the most distressful peace treaties, and then rise again.

We have signed a *Peace of Tilsit*. We shall attain our victory and our liberation, just as the Germans after the Peace of Tilsit of 1807-10 attained their liberation from Napoleon in 1813 and 1814. The interval between our Peace of Tilsit and our liberation will probably be smaller, for history is moving faster.

Down with blustering! For work in earnest, discipline and organization!

Pravda No. 42,
March 6, 1918

REPORT ON WAR AND PEACE

Delivered to the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), March 7, 1918

A political report might consist of an enumeration of measures taken by the Central Committee; but the essential thing at the present moment is not a report of this kind, but a review of our revolution as a whole. Only such a report can serve as a truly Marxian substantiation for all our decisions. We must examine the whole preceding course of development of the revolution and ascertain why the course of its further development has changed. Changes have occurred in our revolution that will have enormous significance for the international revolution. I refer to the October Revolution.

The first successes of the February Revolution were due to the fact that the proletariat was backed, not only by the masses of the rural population, but also by the bourgeoisie. Hence, the easy victory over tsardom, which we failed to achieve in 1905. The unprompted, spontaneous creation of Soviets of Workers' Deputies in the February Revolution was a repetition of the experience of 1905—we had to proclaim the principle of Soviet power. The masses learned the tasks of the revolution from their own experience of the struggle. The events of April 20-21 were a peculiar combination of demonstrations and of something in the nature of armed uprising. This was enough to cause the fall of the bourgeois government. A long period of compromise commenced, the logical consequence of the very nature of the petty-bourgeois government which had come into power. The July events could not yet achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat—the masses were not yet prepared for it. That is why not one of the responsible organizations called upon them to establish it. But as a reconnoitring operation in the enemy's camp, the July events were of enormous significance. The Kornilov affair and subsequent events served as practical lessons and made possible the October victory. The mistake committed by those who even in October desired to divide power was that they did not connect the October victory with the July days, with the offensive, with Kornilov, etc., etc., which caused the vast masses to realize that Soviet government had become inevitable. Then followed

our triumphal march throughout Russia, accompanied by the universal desire for peace. We know that we would not have achieved peace by a one-sided withdrawal from the war. We pointed to this even at the April Conference.* In the period from April to October, the soldiers clearly realized that the policy of compromise was prolonging the war and was leading to the reckless, senseless attempts of the imperialists to start an offensive and to get still more entangled in a war that would last for years That was the reason why it was necessary at all costs to adopt an active policy of peace as quickly as possible, why it was necessary for the Soviets to take power into their own hands, and utterly abolish landlordism You know that the latter was upheld not only by Kerensky but also by Avksentyev who even went so far as to order the arrest of the members of the Land Committees. This policy, the slogan of "Power to the Soviets," which we instilled into the minds of the broad masses of the people, enabled us, in October, to achieve victory so easily in St. Petersburg, and transformed the last months of the Russian revolution into one continuous triumphal march.

Civil war became a fact. The thing we foretold at the beginning of the revolution, and even at the beginning of the war, and which considerable sections of Socialist circles treated sceptically and even with ridicule, *viz.*, the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, actually took place on October 25, 1917, in one of the largest and most backward of the belligerent countries. In this civil war the overwhelming majority of the population proved to be on our side, and that is why victory was achieved with such extraordinary ease

The troops who abandoned the front carried with them wherever they went the maximum of revolutionary determination to put an end to compromise, and the compromising elements, the Whiteguards, the sons of the landlords, were found to have lost all support among the population Gradually, as the broad masses of the people and of the military units that were sent against us came over to the side of the Bolsheviks, this war became transformed into a victorious triumphal march of the revolution We saw this in Petrograd, on the Gatchina front, where the Cossacks, whom Kerensky and Krasnov tried to lead against the Red capital, wavered, we saw this later in Moscow, in Orenburg and in the Ukraine. A wave of civil war swept over the whole of Russia, and everywhere we achieved victory with extraordinary ease precisely because

* The Seventh All Russian Conference of the Bolshevik Party was held April 24 29, 1917 in Petrograd The conference discussed and laid down the Party line on all basic questions of the war and revolution and set the Party the task of effecting the transition from the bourgeois democratic revolution to the Socialist revolution

With reference to the point mentioned by Lenin in the text see Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng ed , Vol XX, Book I "Speech in Favour of the Resolution Relating to the War "—*Ed.*

the fruit had ripened, because the masses had already gone through the experience of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The slogan "All Power to the Soviets," which the masses had tested by long historical experience, had become part of their flesh and blood.

That is why in the first months after October 25, 1917, the Russian revolution was a continuous triumphal march. As a result of this continuous triumphal march the difficulties which the Socialist revolution immediately encountered, and could not but encounter, were forgotten, were pushed into the background. One of the fundamental differences between bourgeois revolution and Socialist revolution is that for the bourgeois revolution, which arises out of feudalism, the new economic organizations are gradually created in the womb of the old order, gradually changing all the aspects of feudal society. Bourgeois revolution was confronted by only one task—to sweep away, to cast aside, to destroy all the fetters of the preceding society. By fulfilling this task every bourgeois revolution fulfills all that is required of it; it accelerates the growth of capitalism.

The Socialist revolution is in an altogether different position. The more backward the country which, owing to the zigzags of history, has proved to be the one to start the Socialist revolution, the more difficult is it for her to pass from the old capitalist relations to Socialist relations. To the tasks of destruction, are added new, incredibly difficult tasks, *viz.*, organizational tasks. Had not the popular creative spirit of the Russian revolution, which had gone through the great experience of the year 1905, given rise to the Soviets as early as February 1917, they could not under any circumstances have assumed power in October, because success depended entirely upon the existence of already available organizational forms of a movement embracing millions. These available forms were the Soviets, and that is why in the political sphere the future held out to us those brilliant successes, the continuous triumphal march, that we had; for the new form of political power was already available, and all we had to do was, by passing a few decrees, to transform the power of the Soviets from the embryonic state in which it existed in the first months of the revolution into a legally recognized form which had become established in the Russian state—*i.e.*, into the Russian Soviet Republic. It was born at one stroke; it was born so easily because in February 1917 the masses created the Soviets even before any party had managed to proclaim this slogan. It was the creative spirit of the people, which had passed through the bitter experience of 1905 and had been made wise by it, that gave rise to this form of proletarian power. The task of achieving victory over the internal enemy was an extremely easy one. The task of creating the political power was an extremely easy one because the masses had created the skeleton, the basis of this power. The Republic of Soviets was born at one stroke. But two exceedingly difficult problems remained, the solution of which could not possibly be the triumphal march we had

our triumphal march throughout Russia, accompanied by the universal desire for peace. We know that we would not have achieved peace by a one-sided withdrawal from the war. We pointed to this even at the April Conference.* In the period from April to October, the soldiers clearly realized that the policy of compromise was prolonging the war and was leading to the reckless, senseless attempts of the imperialists to start an offensive and to get still more entangled in a war that would last for years. That was the reason why it was necessary at all costs to adopt an active policy of peace as quickly as possible, why it was necessary for the Soviets to take power into their own hands, and utterly abolish landlordism You know that the latter was upheld not only by Kerensky but also by Avksentyev who even went so far as to order the arrest of the members of the Land Committees. This policy, the slogan of "Power to the Soviets," which we instilled into the minds of the broad masses of the people, enabled us, in October, to achieve victory so easily in St Petersburg, and transformed the last months of the Russian revolution into one continuous triumphal march.

Civil war became a fact. The thing we foretold at the beginning of the revolution, and even at the beginning of the war, and which considerable sections of Socialist circles treated sceptically and even with ridicule, *viz.*, the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, actually took place on October 25, 1917, in one of the largest and most backward of the belligerent countries. In this civil war the overwhelming majority of the population proved to be on our side, and that is why victory was achieved with such extraordinary ease.

The troops who abandoned the front carried with them wherever they went the maximum of revolutionary determination to put an end to compromise, and the compromising elements, the Whiteguards, the sons of the landlords, were found to have lost all support among the population Gradually, as the broad masses of the people and of the military units that were sent against us came over to the side of the Bolsheviks, this war became transformed into a victorious triumphal march of the revolution. We saw this in Petrograd, on the Gatchina front, where the Cossacks, whom Kerensky and Krasnov tried to lead against the Red capital, wavered; we saw this later in Moscow, in Orenburg and in the Ukraine. A wave of civil war swept over the whole of Russia, and everywhere we achieved victory with extraordinary ease precisely because

---

* The Seventh All Russian Conference of the Bolshevik Party was held April 24 29, 1917 in Petrograd The conference discussed and laid down the Party line on all basic questions of the war and revolution and set the Party the task of effecting the transition from the bourgeois democratic revolution to the Socialist revolution

With reference to the point mentioned by Lenin in the text see Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng ed , Vol XX, Book I "Speech in Favour of the Resolution Relating to the War."—*Ed.*

the fruit had ripened, because the masses had already gone through the experience of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The slogan "All Power to the Soviets," which the masses had tested by long historical experience, had become part of their flesh and blood.

That is why in the first months after October 25, 1917, the Russian revolution was a continuous triumphal march. As a result of this continuous triumphal march the difficulties which the Socialist revolution immediately encountered, and could not but encounter, were forgotten, were pushed into the background. One of the fundamental differences between bourgeois revolution and Socialist revolution is that for the bourgeois revolution, which arises out of feudalism, the new economic organizations are gradually created in the womb of the old order, gradually changing all the aspects of feudal society. Bourgeois revolution was confronted by only one task—to sweep away, to cast aside, to destroy all the fetters of the preceding society. By fulfilling this task every bourgeois revolution fulfills all that is required of it; it accelerates the growth of capitalism.

The Socialist revolution is in an altogether different position. The more backward the country which, owing to the zigzags of history, has proved to be the one to start the Socialist revolution, the more difficult is it for her to pass from the old capitalist relations to Socialist relations. To the tasks of destruction, are added new, incredibly difficult tasks, *viz.*, organizational tasks. Had not the popular creative spirit of the Russian revolution, which had gone through the great experience of the year 1905, given rise to the Soviets as early as February 1917, they could not under any circumstances have assumed power in October, because success depended entirely upon the existence of already available organizational forms of a movement embracing millions. These available forms were the Soviets, and that is why in the political sphere the future held out to us those brilliant successes, the continuous triumphal march, that we had; for the new form of political power was already available, and all we had to do was, by passing a few decrees, to transform the power of the Soviets from the embryonic state in which it existed in the first months of the revolution into a legally recognized form which had become established in the Russian state—*i.e.*, into the Russian Soviet Republic. It was born at one stroke; it was born so easily because in February 1917 the masses created the Soviets even before any party had managed to proclaim this slogan. It was the creative spirit of the people, which had passed through the bitter experience of 1905 and had been made wise by it, that gave rise to this form of proletarian power. The task of achieving victory over the internal enemy was an extremely easy one. The task of creating the political power was an extremely easy one because the masses had created the skeleton, the basis of this power. The Republic of Soviets was born at one stroke. But two exceedingly difficult problems remained, the solution of which could not possibly be the triumphal march we had

in the first months of our revolution—we had no doubt, nor could we have, that the Socialist revolution would be later confronted with enormously difficult tasks

First, there was the problem of internal organization, which confronts every Socialist revolution The difference between Socialist revolution and bourgeois revolution lies precisely in the fact that the latter finds ready forms of capitalist relationships, while the Soviet power—the proletarian power—does not inherit such ready made relationships, if we leave out of account the most developed forms of capitalism, which, strictly speaking, extended to but a small top layer of industry and hardly touched agriculture The organization of accounting, of the control of large enterprises, the transformation of the whole of the state economic mechanism into a single huge machine, into an economic organism that will work in such a way as to enable hundreds of millions of people to be guided by a single plan—such was the enormous organizational problem that rested on our shoulders Under the present conditions of labour this problem could not possibly be solved by the "hurrah" methods by which we were able to solve the problems of the civil war The very nature of the problem prevented a solution by these methods We achieved an easy victory over our Kaledinites and created the Soviet Republic in the face of a resistance that was not even worth serious consideration, such a course of events was predetermined by the whole of the preceding objective development, all we had to do was to say the last word and to change the signboard, i e , to take down the sign "The Soviet exists as a trade union organization," and put up instead the sign "The Soviet is the sole form of state power " But the situation was altogether different in regard to organizational problems In this we encountered enormous difficulties It immediately became clear to everyone who cared to ponder over the tasks of our revolution that only by long and severe self discipline would it be possible to combat the disintegration that the war had caused in capitalist society, that only by extraordinarily long and persistent effort could we overcome this disintegration and conquer those growing elements of it which regarded the revolution as a means of discarding the old fetters and of getting as much for themselves as they possibly could The appearance of a large number of such elements was inevitable in a petty bourgeois country at a time of incredible ruin, and the fight against these elements that is ahead of us will be a hundred times more difficult, it will be a fight that promises no striking positions, and we have only just started this fight We are only at the first stage of this struggle Severe trials await us The objective situation precludes any idea of limiting ourselves to triumphal marches with flying banners such as we had in fighting against the Kaledinites Anyone who attempted to apply these methods of struggle to the organizational problems that confront the revolution would prove to be utterly bankrupt as a politician, as a Socialist, as an active worker in the Socialist revolution

And the same fate awaited several of our young comrades who were carried away by the first triumphal march of the revolution, when the second enormous difficulty confronting the revolution arose, *viz.*, the international question. The reason we achieved such an easy victory over Kerensky's gangs, why we so easily set up our government and without the slightest difficulty passed the decrees on the socialization of the land and on workers' control of industry, the reason why we achieved all this so easily was that a fortunate combination of circumstances protected us for a short time from international imperialism. International imperialism, with the entire might of its capital, with its highly organized military technique, which is a real force, a real fortress of international capital, could not under any circumstances, on any condition, live side by side with the Soviet Republic, both because of its objective position and because of the economic interests of the capitalist class which are embodied in it—it could not do so because of commercial connections, of international financial relations. In this sphere a conflict is inevitable. Therein lies the greatest difficulty of the Russian revolution, its great historical problem: the necessity of solving international problems, the necessity of calling forth an international revolution, of traversing the path from our strictly national revolution to the world revolution. This problem confronts us with all its incredible difficulties. I repeat, many of our young friends who regard themselves as Lefts have begun to forget the most important thing, *viz.*, why in the course of the weeks and months of the great triumph after October we were able so easily to pass from triumph to triumph. And yet this was only due to the fact that a special combination of international circumstances temporarily protected us from imperialism. It had other things to bother about besides us. And it seemed to us that we too had other things to bother about besides imperialism. Individual imperialists had no time to bother with us, because the whole of the great social, political and military might of contemporary world imperialism was rent by internecine war into two groups. The imperialist robbers involved in this struggle had gone to such lengths, were locked in mortal combat, and to such a degree, that neither of these groups was able to concentrate serious forces against the Russian revolution. It was in circumstances such as these that we found ourselves in October: it is paradoxical but true that our revolution broke out at such a fortunate moment when unprecedented disasters had overtaken the overwhelming majority of the imperialist countries involving the destruction of millions of human beings, when the unprecedented disasters attending the war had exhausted the nations, when in the fourth year of the war the belligerent countries had reached an *impasse*, had reached the cross-roads, when the objective question had arisen: can the nations which have been reduced to such a state continue to fight? It was only due to the fact that our revolution broke out at a fortunate moment such as this, when neither of the two gigantic groups of robbers was in a position immediately to hurl itself at

the other, or to unite against us, it was only due to a situation such as this in international political and economic relations that our revolution could and did take advantage of to accomplish its brilliant triumphal march in European Russia, *spread to Finland and begin the conquest of the* Caucasus and Rumania This alone explains the appearance in the leading circles of our Party of Party workers, intellectual supermen, who allowed themselves to be carried away by this triumphal march and who said we can easily smash international imperialism, over there, there will also be a triumphal march, over there, there will be no real difficulties There you have the divergence in the objective position of the Russian revolution which only temporarily took advantage of the hitch in international imperialism, the engine that was supposed to have borne down on us with the force of a railway train bearing down on a truck and smashing it to splinters, was temporarily held up—and the engine was held up because two groups of robbers had clashed Here and there the revolutionary movement grew, but in all the imperialist countries without exception it was still mostly in the initial stage Its rate of development was entirely different from that in our country Anyone who has given careful thought to the economic prerequisites of the Socialist revolution in Europe cannot but be clear on the point that in Europe it will be immeasurably more difficult to start, whereas it was immeasurably easier for us to start, but it will be more difficult for us to continue the revolution than it will be over there. This objective situation caused us to experience an extraordinarily difficult, sharp turn in history From the continuous triumphal march on our internal front, against our counter revolution, against the enemies of the Soviet government in October, November and December, we had to pass to a collision with real international imperialism, in its real hostility towards us From the period of a triumphal march we had to pass to a period in which we were confronted by an extraordinarily difficult and severe position, one which could not be brushed aside with words, with brilliant slogans—however pleasant that would have been—because in our *disturbed* country we *had to deal with incredibly weary masses who had* reached a state in which they could not possibly go on fighting, who were so shattered by three years of agonizing war that they were absolutely useless from a military standpoint Even before the October Revolution we saw representatives of the masses of the soldiers, not members of the Bolshevik Party, who did not fear to tell the whole bourgeoisie the truth that the Russian army refused to fight This state of the army gave rise to a *gigantic crisis* A small peasant country, disorganized by war, reduced to an incredible state and placed in an extremely difficult condition, we have no army, but we have to go on living side by side with a robber who is armed to the teeth, a robber who has remained and will remain a robber and, of course, cannot be moved by agitation in favour of peace without annexations and indemnities A tame, domesticated animal was lying side by side with a tiger and tried to persuade the latter to conclude a peace

without annexations and indemnities, whereas the only way such a peace could be attained was by attacking the tiger. The top layer of our Party—intellectuals and a section of the workers' organizations—tried to brush this prospect aside primarily with phrases and excuses, such as: it must not be like that. This peace was too incredible a prospect; to think that we, who up to now have marched in open battle with flying colours and stormed the enemy's positions with "hurrahs," should now yield and accept these humiliating terms. Never! We are proud revolutionaries, we declare above all: "The Germans cannot attack."

This was the first excuse with which these people consoled themselves. History has now placed us in an extraordinarily difficult position; in the midst of organizational work of extraordinary difficulty we shall have to *experience a number of tormenting setbacks.* *Of course, if we look at it* from a world historical scale, there can be no doubt that from the standpoint of the ultimate victory of our revolution, if it were to remain alone, if there were no revolutionary movements in other countries, then our position would be hopeless. When the Bolshevik Party tackled the job alone, took it entirely into its own hands, we were convinced that the revolution was maturing in all countries and that in the end—but not at the very beginning—no matter what difficulties we experienced, no matter what defeats were in store for us, the international Socialist revolution would come—because it is coming; would ripen—because it is ripening and will grow ripe. I repeat, our salvation from all these difficulties is an all-European revolution. Taking this absolutely abstract truth as our starting point, and being guided by it, we must see to it that it does not in time become a mere phrase, because every abstract truth, if it is accepted without analysis, becomes a mere phrase. If you say that every strike bears within itself the hydra of revolution, and he who fails to understand this is no Socialist, you are right. Yes, every strike bears within itself the Socialist revolution. But if you say that every given strike is an immediate step towards the Socialist revolution, you will be uttering empty phrases. We have heard these phrases "every blessed time on this very same spot" so often that we are sick and tired of them, and the workers have rejected these anarchist phrases. Undoubtedly, clear as it is that every strike contains within itself the hydra of Socialist revolution, it is equally clear that the assertion that every strike can develop into revolution is utter nonsense. While it is indisputable that all the difficulties of our revolution will be overcome only when the world Socialist revolution matures, and it is maturing everywhere—it is absolutely absurd to declare that we must conceal every concrete difficulty of our revolution today and say: "I stake everything on the international Socialist movement—I can commit any piece of folly I please." "Liebknecht will help us out, because he is going to win, anyhow." He will create such an excellent organization, he will plan everything beforehand so well, that we will be able to take available forms in the same way as we took the available Marxian doctrine from Western Europe—and that is why it was

able to triumph in our country in a few months, whereas scores of years are required for its triumph in Western Europe Thus, applying the old method of solving the problem of the struggle by a triumphal march to the new historical period which has set in, and which has confronted us, not with a rotten little Kerensky and a Kornilov, but with an international robber—the imperialism of Germany, where the revolution is ripening but is obviously not quite ripe—is a useless gamble The assertion that the enemy would not dare attack the revolution was such a gamble The situation at the time of the Brest Litovsk negotiations was not yet such as to compel us to adopt any peace terms The objective correlation of forces was such that obtaining a respite was not enough The Brest Litovsk negotiations *had to show that the Germans would attack, that German society was not so* pregnant with revolution that it could give birth to it at once, and we cannot *blame the German imperialists for not having by their conduct* prepared for the outbreak, or, as our young friends who regard themselves as Lefts say, *for the position in which the Germans could not attack* When we tell them that we have no army, that we were compelled to demobilize—we were compelled to do so, although we did not forget that a tiger was lying beside our tame, domestic animal—they refuse to understand Although we were compelled to demobilize we did not forget that it was impossible to stop the war by one side sticking its bayonet in the ground

Generally speaking, how is it that not a single trend, not a single tendency, not a single organization in our Party opposed this demobilization? Had we gone mad? Not in the least Officers, not Bolsheviks, told us even before October that the army could not fight, that it could not be kept at the front even for a few weeks longer After October this became ob*vious to everybody who was willing to see the facts, willing to see the* unpleasant, bitter reality and not hide, or pull his cap over his eyes, and make shift with proud phrases We have no army, we cannot hold it The best thing we can do is to demobilize it as quickly as possible This is the sick *part of the organism, which has suffered incredible torture and mutilation* as the result of the privations of war, into which it entered technically unprepared, and from which it has emerged in such a state that it falls into a panic at every order to advance We cannot blame these people who have suffered so much In hundreds of resolutions we have said quite frankly, we said it even in the first period of the Russian revolution "We are drowning in blood, we cannot go on fighting " We could have postponed the end of the war artificially, we could have committed the frauds Kerensky committed, we could have postponed the end for a few weeks, but objective reality forced a path for itself This is the sick part of the Russian body politic, which can no longer bear the burden of this war The quicker we demobilize it the quicker will it become absorbed among those parts that are not so sick and the quicker will the country be prepared for new, severe trials That is what we felt when we unanimously, without the slightest protest, adopted the decision—which was absurd from the point of view of foreign

events—to demobilize the army. It was the proper step to take. We said that it was a frivolous illusion to believe that we could hold the army. The more quickly we demobilize the army, the more quickly will the social organism as a whole recover. That is why the revolutionary phrase: "The Germans cannot attack," from which followed the other phrase: "We can declare the state of war at an end. Neither war nor the signing of peace," was such a profound mistake, such a bitter overestimation of events. But suppose the Germans do attack? "No, they cannot attack." Have you the right to stake, not the fate of the international revolution, but the concrete question: will you not prove to be accomplices of German imperialism at the decisive moment? But we, who since October 1917 have become defencists, who have recognized the principle of defence of the fatherland, we all know that we have broken with imperialism, not in words but in deeds: we have destroyed the secret treaties, vanquished the bourgeoisie in our own country and proposed an open honourable peace so that all the nations might see what our intentions are. How can people who seriously accept the point of view of defending the Soviet Republic agree to a gamble which has already brought forth bitter fruit? And this is a fact, because the severe crisis which our Party is now experiencing, owing to the formation of a Left opposition within it, is one of the gravest crises the Russian revolution has experienced.

This crisis will be overcome. Under no circumstances will it break the neck of our Party, or of our revolution, although at the present moment it is very near doing so; it is quite possible. The guarantee that we will not break our neck on this question lies in the fact that instead of applying the old method of settling factional disagreements, the old method of issuing an enormous quantity of literature, of discussions and plenty of splits, instead of this old method, events have brought our people a new method of learning things. This method is testing everything with facts, with events, with the lessons of world history. You say that the Germans cannot attack. The logic of your tactics is that we can declare the state of war to be at an end. History taught you a lesson, it dispersed this illusion. Yes, the German revolution is growing, but not as fast as we would like it, not as fast as Russian intellectuals would like it, not at the rate our history developed in October—when we entered any town we liked, proclaimed the Soviet government, and within a few days nine-tenths of the workers came over to our side. The German revolution has the misfortune of not moving so quickly. What do you think: must we reckon with the revolution, or must the revolution reckon with us? You would like the revolution to reckon with you. But history has taught you a lesson. It is a lesson, because it is the absolute truth that without a German revolution we are doomed—perhaps not in Petrograd, not in Moscow, but in Vladivostok, in more remote places to which perhaps we shall have to retreat, and the distance to which is greater than the distance from Petrograd to Moscow. At all events, under all conceivable vicissitudes, if the German revolution does not come, we

are doomed Nevertheless, this does not in the least shake our conviction that we must be able to bear the most difficult position without a fanfaronade.

The revolution will not come as quickly as we expected History has proved this, and we must be able to take this as a fact, reckon with the fact that the world Socialist revolution cannot begin so easily in the advanced countries as the revolution began in Russia—in the land of Nicholas and Rasputin, the land in which an enormous part of the population was absolutely indifferent as to what peoples were living in the outlying regions, or to what was happening there. In such a country it was quite easy to start a revolution, as easy as lifting a feather

But to start a revolution in a country in which capitalism is developed, in which it has produced a democratic culture and organization, provided it to everybody—to do so without preparation would be wrong, absurd We are only just approaching the painful period of the beginning of Socialist revolutions This is a fact We do not know, no one knows, perhaps—it is quite possible—it will conquer within a few weeks, even within a few days, but we cannot stake everything on that We must be prepared for extraordinary difficulties, for extraordinarily severe defeats, which are inevitable, because the revolution in Europe has not yet begun, although it may begin to morrow, and when it does begin then, of course, we shall not be tortured by doubts, there will be no question about a revolutionary war, but just one continuous triumphal march That will be, it will inevitably be so, but it is not so yet This is the simple fact that history has taught us, with which she has hit us rather painfully—and a man who has been thrashed is worth two that haven't That is why I think that after history has shattered our hope that the Germans cannot attack and that we can get everything by shouting "hurrah!" this lesson, with the help of our Soviet organizations, will very quickly sink into the minds of the masses all over Soviet Russia They are all up and doing, gathering, preparing for the Congress, passing resolutions, thinking over what has occurred What is taking place at the present time does not resemble the old pre-revolutionary controversies which remained within narrow Party circles, now all resolutions are discussed by the masses who demand that they be tested by experience, by deeds, and who never allow themselves to be carried away by frivolous speeches, and never allow themselves to be diverted from the path prescribed by the objective progress of events Of course, an intellectual, or a Left Bolshevik, will try to gloss over difficulties He can gloss over such facts as the lack of an army and the failure of the revolution to come in Germany. The vast masses—and politics begin where the masses are, not where there are thousands, but millions, that is where serious politics begin—the vast masses know what an army is, they have seen soldiers returning from the front They know—that is, if you take, not individual persons, but real masses—that we cannot fight, that every man at the front has endured everything that it is possible to endure. The mas-

ses have understood the truth, *viz.*, that if we have no army, and a wild beast is lying beside us, we will have to sign a distressful, humiliating peace treaty. That is inevitable until the birth of the revolution, until your army recovers, until you allow the men to return home. Until then the invalid will not recover. And we will not be able to capture the German wild beast by shouting "hurrah!"; we will not throw him off as easily as we threw off Kerensky and Kornilov. This is the lesson that the masses learned without the excuses that those who desire to evade bitter reality try to bring them.

At first a continuous triumphal march in October and November—then, suddenly, in the space of a few weeks, the Russian revolution is defeated by the German robber; the Russian revolution is prepared to adopt the terms of a predatory treaty. Yes, the turns of history are very sharp. All such turns affect us severely. When, in 1907, we signed the incredibly shameful internal treaty with Stolypin, when we were compelled to pass through the pig-sty of the Stolypin Duma and undertook obligations by signing monarchist documents,* we experienced on a small scale what we are experiencing now. At that time, people who belonged to the best vanguard of the revolution said (and they too had not the slightest doubt that they were right), "we are proud revolutionaries, we believe in the Russian revolution, we will never enter legal Stolypin institutions." But you will. The life of the masses, history, are stronger than your protestations. If you won't go, history will compel you to do so. These were very Left people and after the first turn in history nothing remained of them as a faction but smoke. If we managed to remain revolutionaries, managed to work under terrible conditions and emerge from them, we will be able to do so now too, because it is not our caprice, it is objective inevitability created in an utterly ruined country, because in spite of our desires the European revolution dared to be late, and in spite of our desires, German imperialism dared to attack.

Here we must be able to retreat. We cannot hide the incredibly bitter, deplorable reality from ourselves with phrases; we must say: God grant that we retreat in semi-good order. We cannot retreat in perfect order, but God grant that we retreat in semi-good order, that we gain a little time in which the sick part of our organism can be absorbed at least to some extent. On the whole the organism is sound, it will overcome its sickness. But you cannot expect it to overcome it all at once, instantaneously; you cannot hold up an army in flight. When I said to one of our young friends, a would-be Left: Comrade, go to the front, see what is going on there—he took offense at this proposal. He said: "They want to deport us so as to prevent our agitating for the great principle of a revolutionary war." To tell the truth, in making this proposal I had no intention whatever of de-

* The reference here is to the oath of allegiance which every member of the State Duma had to sign on taking his seat.—*Ed.*

porting factional enemies, I merely suggested that they go and see for themselves that the army was in full flight. Even before that we knew, even before that we could not close our eyes to the fact that the disintegration of the army had reached incredible proportions, to the extent of selling our guns to the Germans for next to nothing. We knew that, just as we know that the army cannot be held back, and that the excuse that the Germans will not attack was a great gamble. Since the European revolution has been delayed severe defeats await us because we lack an army, because we lack organization, because, at the moment, we cannot solve these two problems. If you are unable to adapt yourself, if you are not inclined to crawl in the mud on your belly, you are not a revolutionary but a chatterbox and I propose this, not because I like it, but because we have no other road, because history has not turned out to be so pleasant as to make the revolution ripen everywhere simultaneously.

Events are proceeding in such a way that civil war commenced as an attempt to come into collision with imperialism, which showed that imperialism was rotten to the core and that the proletarian elements were rising in every army. Yes, we will see the international world revolution, but for the time being it is a very good fairy tale, a very beautiful fairy tale—I quite understand children liking beautiful fairy tales. But I ask, is it seeming for a serious revolutionary to believe fairy tales? There is an element of reality in every fairy tale. If you told fairy tales to children in which the cock and the cat did not converse in human language they would not be interested. The same thing happens when you tell the people that civil war will break out in Germany and at the same time promise that instead of a collision with imperialism we will have an international revolution in the field. The people will say that you are deceiving them. By that you are overcoming the difficulties with which history has confronted us *only in your minds, in your desires*. It will be a good thing if the German proletariat will be able to come out But have you measured, have you discovered such an instrument, one that will determine that the German revolution will break out on such and such a day? No, that you do not know, and neither do we. You are staking everything on this card. If the revolution breaks out, everything is saved Of course! But if it does not turn out as we desire, supposing it does not achieve victory to morrow—what then? Then the masses will say to you: you acted like gamblers—you staked everything on a fortunate turn of events that did not take place, you proved unfit for the situation that actually arose *in place of an international revolution*, which will inevitably come, but which has not ripened yet.

A period has set in of severe defeats, inflicted by imperialism, armed to the teeth, upon a country which has demobilized its army, which had to demobilize. What I foretold has come to pass. instead of the Brest-Litovsk Peace we have received a much more humiliating peace, and the blame for this rests upon those who refused to accept the former peace We knew that

through the fault of the army we were concluding peace with imperialism. We sat at the same table with Hoffmann * and not with Liebknecht—and in doing so we assisted the German revolution. But now you are assisting German imperialism, because you have surrendered wealth amounting to millions—guns and shells—and anybody who had seen the incredibly painful state of the army could have foretold this. Every conscientious man who came from the front said that had the Germans made the slightest attack we would have perished inevitably. We fell a prey to the enemy within a few days.

Having learned this lesson, we shall overcome our split, our crisis, however severe the disease may be, because an immeasurably more reliable ally will come to our assistance, *viz.*, the world revolution. When they talk to us about ratifying this Tilsit Peace, this incredible peace, more humiliating and predatory than the Brest Peace, I say: certainly, yes. We must do this because we look at things from the point of view of the masses. Any attempt to apply the tactics of October-November in a single country—this triumphant period of the revolution—to apply them with the aid of our fantasy to the progress of events in the world revolution, is doomed to failure. When it is said that the respite is a fantasy, when the newspaper called the *Kommunist* **—from the word "Commune," I suppose—when this paper fills column after column in the attempt to refute the respite theory, I say: I have known quite a lot of factional conflicts and splits and so I have a great deal of experience; but I must say that it is clear to me that the disease will not be cured by the old method of factional Party splits, because it will be healed by life first. Life is marching forward very quickly. In this respect it is operating magnificently. History is driving its locomotive with such speed that before the editors of the *Kommunist* get out their next issue the majority of the workers in Petrograd will have begun to be disappointed in its ideas, because life is showing that the respite is a fact. We are now signing a peace treaty, we have a respite, we are taking advantage of it to defend our fatherland better—because had we been at war we would have had an army fleeing in panic which would have had to be held up, and which our comrades cannot and could not hold up, because war is more powerful than sermons, more powerful than ten thousand arguments. Since they did not understand the objective situation they could not hold up the army, and cannot do so. This sick army infected the whole organism, and another incredible defeat was inflicted upon us. German imperialism struck another blow at the revolution, a severe blow, because we frivolously deprived ourselves of machine guns under the blows of imperialism. Meanwhile, we shall take advantage of this respite to urge the people to unite, to fight, to say to the Russian workers and peasants: "Create self-discipline, strict discipline, otherwise

* *Max Hoffmann* (1869-1927)—German general who headed the German delegation at the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk in 1918.—*Ed.*

** The factional organ of the "Left Communists."—*Ed.*

you will have to lie under the German jackboot as you are lying now, as you will *inevitably* have to lie, until the people learn to fight and to create an army capable, not of flight, but of withstanding the severest trials." It is inevitable, because the German revolution has not yet broken out, and we have no guarantee that it will break out to-morrow.

That is why the respite theory, which is totally rejected in the flood of articles in the *Kommunist*, is advanced by life itself. Everyone can see that the respite is a fact, that everyone is taking advantage of it. We believed that we would lose Petrograd in a few days when the advancing German troops were only a few days' march away from it, and when our best sailors and the Putilov workers, notwithstanding all their enthusiasm, were isolated, when incredible chaos and panic broke out, which compelled our troops to flee right up to Gatchina, and when we had cases when positions were recaptured that had never been lost. For example, a telegraph operator arrived at the station, sat down at the apparatus and wired: "*No Germans in sight. We have occupied the station.*" *A few hours* later I received a telephone communication from the Commissariat of Ways of Communication informing me "We have occupied the next station. We are approaching Yamburg. No Germans in sight. Telegraph operator at his post " That is the kind of thing we had. This is the real history of the eleven days' war. It was described to us by sailors and Putilov workers, who ought to be brought to the Congress of Soviets. Let them tell the truth. It is a frightfully bitter, humiliating, painful truth, but it is a hundred times more useful, it is understood by the Russian people

I leave it to others to dream about the international revolution in the field, for it will come. Everything will come in due time, but for the time being, set to work to create self discipline, obey, come what may, so that we can have exemplary order, so that the workers may learn to fight for at least one hour in twenty four This is a little more difficult than writing beautiful fairy tales This is the position today, by that you will help tl German revolution, the international revolution. We do not know ho many days the respite will last, but we have got it. We must demobili: the army as quickly as possible, because it is a sick organ, meanwhil we will *assist the Finnish revolution*.

Yes, of course, we are violating the treaty, we have violated it thirt or *forty times. Only children can fail to understand that in an epoch lik* the present, when a long painful period of emancipation is setting ir which has only just created and raised the Soviet power three stages c its development—only children can fail to understand that in this cas there must be a long, circumspect struggle The disgraceful peace treat is rousing rebellion, but when a comrade from the *Kommunist* talks abou war he appeals to sentiment and forgets that the people were "seein; red," were clenching their fists with rage. What do they* say? "A class conscious revolutionary will never stand this, will never submit to sucl

* *I e*, the "Left Communists "—*Ed*

a disgrace." Their newspaper bears the title *Kommunist*, but it should bear the title *Szlachcic** because it looks at things from the point of view of the *szlachcic* who, dying in a beautiful pose, sword in hand, said: "Peace is disgraceful, war is honourable." They argue from the point of view of the *szlachcic*; I argue from the point of view of the peasant.

If I accept peace when the army is in flight, and cannot but be in flight, without losing thousands of men, I accept it in order to prevent things from getting worse. Is the treaty shameful? Every sober-minded peasant and worker will say I am right, because they understand that peace is a means of accumulating strength. History knows the case—I have referred to it more than once—the case of the liberation of the Germans from Napoleon after the Peace of Tilsit; I deliberately called the peace a Tilsit peace, although we did not undertake to do what was stipulated in that treaty, namely, an obligation to provide troops to assist the victor to conquer other nations—things like that have happened before, and will happen to us if we continue to place our hopes on the international revolution in the field. Take care that history does not reduce us to this form of military slavery. Until the Socialist revolution is victorious in all countries there is a danger that the Soviet Republic may be reduced to slavery. In Tilsit, Napoleon compelled the Germans to accept incredibly disgraceful peace terms. The situation at that time was that peace was signed several times. The Hoffmann of the time—Napoleon—time and again caught the Germans violating the peace treaty, and the present Hoffmann will try to catch us at it. Only we shall take care that he does not catch us soon.

The last war has been a bitter, painful, but serious lesson for the Russian people. It taught them to organize, to become disciplined, to obey, to create a discipline that will be exemplary discipline. Learn discipline from the Germans; if we do not, we, as a people, are doomed, we shall live in eternal slavery.

This is the way history has proceeded and no other way. History suggests that peace is a respite for another war, war is a method of obtaining a somewhat better or somewhat worse peace. At Brest the relation of forces corresponded to a peace dictated by the victor, but it was not a humiliating peace. The relation of forces at Pskov corresponded to a disgraceful, more humiliating peace; and in Petrograd and Moscow, at the next stage a peace four times more humiliating will be dictated to us. We will not say that the Soviet power is only a form, as our young Moscow friends have said, we will not say that the content can be sacrificed for this or that revolutionary principle. We will say: let the Russian people understand that they must become disciplined and organized, and then they will be able to withstand all the Tilsit peace treaties. The whole history of wars for liberation shows that when these wars involved large masses liberation came very quickly. We say: since history marches forward in this way,

* *Szlachcic*—the Polish for nobleman.—*Ed.*

we will have to abandon peace for war, and this may happen within the next few days. Every man must be prepared. I have not the slightest shadow of doubt that the Germans are preparing near Narva, if it is true that it has not been taken, as all the newspapers say, not in Narva, but near Narva, not in Pskov, but near Pskov, the Germans are grouping their regular army, their railways, in order, at the next jump, to capture Petrograd. And this beast can jump very well. He has proved that. He will jump again. There is not a shadow of doubt about that. That is why we must be prepared, we must be able, not to brag, but to take advantage of even a single day of respite, because we can take advantage of even one day's respite to evacuate Petrograd, the capture of which will cause incredible suffering to hundreds of thousands of our proletarians. I say again that I am ready to sign, and that I consider it my duty to sign a treaty twenty times, a hundred times more humiliating, in order to gain at least a few days in which to evacuate Petrograd, because by this I will alleviate the sufferings of the workers, who otherwise may fall under the yoke of the Germans, by that I facilitate the removal from Petrograd of all the materials, gunpowder, etc., which we need, because I am a defencist, because I stand for preparing an army even in the most remote rear where our present, demobilized, sick army is recuperating.

We do not know how long the respite will last—we will try to take advantage of the situation. Perhaps the respite will be a long one, perhaps it will last only a few days. Anything may happen, no one knows, or can know, because all the big powers are bound, restricted, compelled to fight on several fronts. Hoffmann's behaviour is determined first by the fact that he must smash the Soviet Republic, secondly, that he has to wage war on a number of fronts, and thirdly, that the revolution in Germany is maturing, is growing, and Hoffmann knows this. He cannot, as some assert, take Petrograd and Moscow this very minute. But he may do so to-morrow, that is quite possible I repeat that at a moment when the army is obviously sick, when we are taking advantage of every moment, come what may, to get at least one day's respite, we say that every serious revolutionary who has contacts with the masses and who knows what war is, what the masses are, must discipline the masses, must heal them, must try to arouse them for a new war—every such revolutionary will admit that we are right, will admit that we were right in signing any disgraceful peace, because it is in the interests of the proletarian revolution and the regeneration of Russia, because it will help to get rid of the sick limb. As every sensible man will understand, by signing this peace treaty we do not put a stop to our workers' revolution, everyone will understand that by concluding peace with the Germans we do not stop rendering military aid; we are sending arms to the Finns, but not military units which proved to be unfit.

Perhaps we will accept war, perhaps to-morrow we will surrender even Moscow and then pass to the offensive, if the necessary change takes

place in the mood of the people, which is maturing and for which perhaps much time is required, but which will come, when the broad masses will not say what they are saying now, we will move our army against the enemy. I am compelled to accept the harshest peace terms because I cannot say to myself that this time has arrived. When the time of regeneration arrives everyone will realize it, will see that the Russian is no fool; they will see and understand that for the time being we must refrain, that this slogan must be carried through—and this is the main task of our Party Congress and of the Congress of Soviets.

We must learn to work on a new path. That is much more difficult, but it is by no means hopeless. It will not break the Soviet power if we do not break it ourselves by senseless gambling. The time will come when the people will say: we will not permit ourselves to be tortured any longer. But this will happen if we do not allow ourselves to be drawn into this adventure and are able to work under severe conditions and under the incredibly humiliating treaty we signed the other day, because war alone, or a peace treaty alone, cannot solve such a historical crisis. Because of its monarchical organization, the German people was fettered in 1807 when it signed its Peace of Tilsit after several humiliating peace treaties, which were transformed into respites for new humiliations and new infringements. The Soviet organization of the masses makes our task easier.

We should have but one slogan—seriously learn the art of war, introduce order on the railways. To wage a Socialist revolutionary war without railways would be the most sinister treachery. We must create order, and we must create the whole of that energy and the whole of that might which all that is best in the revolution will create.

Take advantage even of an hour's respite if it is given you, in order to maintain contact with the remote rear and there create new armies. Abandon illusions for which life has punished you and will punish you more severely in the future. An epoch of severe defeats is looming up before us, it has set in, we must be able to reckon with it, we must be prepared for persistent work in conditions of illegality, in conditions of downright slavery to the Germans; it is no use glossing this over; it is really a Peace of Tilsit. If we are able to act in this way, then, in spite of defeat, we shall be able to say with absolute certainty—victory will be ours.

Published in 1923 in
The Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Verbatim Report, March 6-8, 1918

THE CHIEF TASK OF OUR DAY

Thou art wretched, thou art abundant,
Thou art mighty, thou art impotent—
Mother Russia!

Human history these days is making a momentous and most difficult turn, a stupendous turn—a turn, one might say without the least exaggeration, of significance to world emancipation. A turn from war to peace; from a war between marauders who are sending to the shambles millions of the toiling and exploited for the sake of establishing a new system of dividing the spoils plundered by the strongest of the robbers, to a war of the oppressed against the oppressors for emancipation from the yoke of capital; a turn from an abyss of suffering, anguish, starvation and degradation to the bright future of a Communist society, universal prosperity and enduring peace. No wonder, therefore, that at the abruptest points of this abrupt turn, when all around, with a terrific roaring and rending, the old order is breaking down and collapsing, while at the same time the new order is being born amid indescribable suffering, there are some whose heads grow dizzy, who are seized by despair, who seek salvation from the at times too bitter reality in fine-sounding and alluring phrases.

It has been Russia's lot very plainly to witness, and most keenly and painfully to experience one of the abruptest of abrupt twists of history as it turns from imperialism towards the Communist revolution. In the space of a few days we destroyed one of the oldest, most powerful, barbarous and brutal of monarchies. In the space of a few months we passed through a number of stages, stages of compromise with the bourgeoisie and stages of shaking off petty-bourgeois illusions, for which other countries have required decades. In the course of a few weeks, having overthrown the bourgeoisie, we crushed its open resistance in civil war. We passed in a victorious triumphal march of Bolshevism from one end of a vast country to the other. We raised up to liberty and independent life the lowest of the toiling masses oppressed by tsardom and the bourgeoisie. We established and consolidated a Soviet republic, a new type of state, which is infinitely superior to and more democratic than the best of the bourgeois-parliamentary republics. We established the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry, and began a broadly-con-

ceived system of Socialist reforms. We aroused the workers' faith in their strength and kindled the fires of enthusiasm in millions upon millions of workers of all countries. Everywhere we issued the call for a world workers' revolution. We cast a challenge to the imperialist marauders of all countries.

Then in a few days we were thrown to the ground by an imperialist marauder, who fell upon the unarmed. He compelled us to sign an incredibly onerous and humiliating peace—as tribute for having dared to tear ourselves, even for the shortest space of time, from the iron clutches of an imperialist war. The marauder is crushing, stifling and rending Russia with the greater ferocity, the more ominously there rises up before him the phantom of a workers' revolution in his own country.

We were compelled to sign a "Tilsit" peace. We have no need for self-deception. We must courageously look the bitter, unadorned truth straight in the face. We must measure fully, to the very depths, that abyss of defeat, dismemberment, enslavement, and humiliation into which we have now been cast. The more clearly we do that, the firmer and more steeled and tempered will be our will to emancipation, our aspiration to rise again from enslavement to independence, and our unbending determination to see to it that Russia ceases to be wretched and impotent and becomes mighty and abundant in the full meaning of the word.

And mighty and abundant she can be, for, after all, we still have sufficient space and natural wealth left to us to supply each and all, if not with abundant, at least with adequate means of life. In our natural wealth, in our stores of man power, and in the splendid impetus which the great revolution has imparted to the creative powers of the people, we have the material for the creation of a truly mighty and abundant Russia.

Russia will become mighty and abundant if she casts aside all dejection and all phrasemongering, if she grits her teeth, musters all her forces, strains every nerve, bends every muscle, and if she understands that salvation lies *only* along that road of the international Socialist revolution upon which we have set foot. It is by marching forward along that road, undismayed by defeats, it is by laying stone by stone the firm foundation of a Socialist society, and by working with might and main for the building of discipline and self-discipline and for firmly implanting everywhere organization, order, efficiency, the harmonious co-operation of all the forces of the people, and accountancy and control of the production and distribution of products, that we can build up military might and Socialist might.

It would be unseemly of a genuine Socialist who has suffered grave defeat either to bluster or to give way to despair. It is not true that our position is hopeless and that all that remains for us is to choose between an "inglorious" death (inglorious from the point of view of the *Szlachcic*), such as this most onerous peace represents, and a "gallant"

death in a hopeless fight. It is not true that by signing a "Tilsit" peace we have betrayed our ideals or our friends. We have betrayed nothing and nobody, we have not sanctified or covered up any lie, we have not refused to help a single friend or comrade in misfortune in every way we could and with everything at our disposal. A general who withdraws the remnants of his army into the heart of the country when it has been beaten or is stricken by panic flight, or who, at an extremity, covers its retreat by an onerous and humiliating peace, *is not guilty of treachery* towards that part of his army which he is powerless to help and which has been cut off by the enemy. Such a general performs his duty by choosing the only way of saving what can still be saved, by refusing to engage in a reckless adventure, by not concealing the bitter truth from the people, by "surrendering space in order to gain time," by taking advantage of *any and every* even briefest respite in which to muster his forces and to allow his army to rest or recover, if it has been stricken by disintegration and demoralization.

We have signed a "Tilsit" peace When Napoleon I, in 1807, compelled Prussia to sign the Peace of Tilsit, the conqueror broke up the Germans' entire army, occupied their capital and all their big cities, introduced his own police, compelled the vanquished to supply him, the conqueror, with auxiliary corps for fresh predatory wars, and divided up Germany, concluding alliances with some German states against others. Nevertheless, the German people survived even *such* a peace, were able to muster their forces, to rise and to win the right to liberty and independence.

To all who are able to think and who want to think, the example of the Peace of Tilsit (which was only one of many onerous and humiliating treaties which were forced upon the Germans at that period) clearly shows how childishly naive is the idea that under all conditions an onerous peace means the bottomless pit of ruin, while war is the path of valour and salvation. The epochs of war teach us *that peace has not infrequently in history served as a respite and a means of mustering* forces for new battles. The Peace of Tilsit was an extreme humiliation for Germany, but at the same time it was a turning point towards a supreme national uplift. At that time historical conditions were such as to furnish no outlet for this uplift except in the direction of a *bourgeois* state. At that time, one hundred years ago and more, history was made by handfuls of nobles and a sprinkling of bourgeois intellectuals, while the worker and peasant masses were somnolent and dormant. As a result history at that time could only crawl at a terribly slow pace

But now capitalism has raised culture in general, and the culture of the masses in particular, to a much higher level. War has shaken up the masses, has awakened them by untold horrors and suffering. War has given a jolt to history and it is now flying with locomotive speed. History is now being made by millions and tens of millions of people independently Capitalism has now ripened for Socialism.

Consequently, if Russia is now passing—as she undeniably is—from a "Tilsit" peace to a national uplift, to a great patriotic war, a war for the fatherland, the outlet for this uplift is not in the direction of a bourgeois state, but in the direction of an international Socialist revolution. Since October 25, 1917, we are defencists. We are for "defence of the fatherland"; but that war for the fatherland towards which we are moving is a war for a Socialist fatherland, for Socialism as a fatherland, for the Soviet Republic, as a *detachment* of the world army of Socialism.

"Hate the Germans, kill the Germans"— such was, and is, the slogan of common or garden, *i.e.*, bourgeois, patriotism. But we say: "Hate the imperialist marauders, hate capitalism, death to capitalism"; and at the same time: "Learn from the Germans! Remain true to the brotherly alliance with the German workers. They are late in coming to our aid. We are playing for time, we shall wait for them, and they *will come* to our aid."

Yes, learn from the Germans. History is moving in zigzags and by roundabout ways. It so happens that it is precisely the Germans who now personify, besides a brutal imperialism, the principle of discipline, organization, harmonious co-operation on the basis of modern machine industry, and strict accounting and control.

And that is just what we lack. That is just what we must school ourselves for. That is just what our great revolution needs in order that we may pass from a triumphant beginning, through a series of severe trials, to a triumphant end. That is just what the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic requires in order to cease being wretched and impotent and unalterably to become mighty and abundant.

Printed in *Izvestia* No. 46,
March 12, 1918

THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE RUSSIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Thanks to the peace which has been achieved—notwithstanding its thoroughly onerous character and its instability—the Russian Soviet Republic has received an opportunity for a certain period of time to concentrate its efforts on the most important and most difficult aspect of the Socialist revolution, namely, the organizational problem.

This problem was clearly and definitely presented to all the toilers and the oppressed masses in the fourth section (Part 4) of the resolution adopted at the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets in Moscow on March 16, 1918,* in the very section (or part) which speaks of the discipline of the *toilers and of the ruthless struggle against chaos and disorganization.*

Of course, the peace achieved by the Russian Soviet Republic is unstable not because it is now thinking of resuming military operations, apart from bourgeois counter-revolutionaries and their henchmen (the Mensheviks and others) not a single sane politician thinks of doing that. The instability of the peace is due to the fact that in the imperialist states bordering on Russia on the West and the East, which command enormous military

* The resolution on the ratification of the Brest Litovsk Peace Treaty adopted at the Fourth Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets,—was drawn up by Lenin Section four of the resolution reads as follows "The Congress most urgently submits to all workers, soldiers and peasants, to all the toilers and oppressed masses, the most important, immediate and necessary task of the present moment, *viz*, to increase the activity and self discipline of the toilers, to create everywhere strong and harmonious organizations embracing as far as possible the whole of the production and distribution of products, to ruthlessly combat the chaos, disorganization and ruin which were the historically inevitable heritage of the torturous war, but which [illegible] the cause of the final victory of [illegible] nda-tions of Socialist society" The [illegible] ssue of March 16, 1918 —*Ed*

forces, the military party, tempted by the momentary weakness of Russia and egged on by capitalists who hate Socialism and are eager for plunder, may secure supremacy at any moment.

Under these circumstances the only real, not paper guarantee of peace we have is the antagonism between the imperialist states, which has reached extreme limits, and which manifests itself on the one hand in the resumption of the imperialist butchery of the peoples in the West, and on the other hand in the extreme intensification of the imperialist rivalry between Japan and America for supremacy in the Pacific and on the Pacific coast.

It goes without saying that with such an unreliable guard to protect it, our Soviet Socialist Republic is in an extremely unstable and certainly critical international position. All efforts must be exerted to the very utmost to take advantage of the respite which has been given us by the combination of circumstances in order that the very severe wounds that the war has inflicted upon the whole of the social organism of Russia may be healed and that the economic revival of the country, without which a real improvement in the power of defence of the country is inconceivable, may be brought about.

It goes without saying also that we shall be able to render serious assistance to the Socialist revolution in the West, which has been delayed for a number of reasons, only to the extent that we are able to fulfil the organizational task that confronts us.

A fundamental condition for the successful fulfilment of the primary organizational task that confronts us is that the political leaders of the people, *i.e.*, the members of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and all the class-conscious representatives of the masses of the toilers, shall fully appreciate the fundamental difference between previous bourgeois revolutions and the present Socialist revolution in this respect.

In bourgeois revolutions, the principal task of the masses of the toilers was to fulfil the negative or destructive work of abolishing feudalism, monarchy and mediaevalism. The positive, or creative work of organizing the new society was carried out by the property-owning bourgeois minority of the population. And the latter carried out this task with relative ease, notwithstanding the resistance of the workers and the poorest peasants, not only because the resistance of the masses that were exploited by capital was then extremely weak owing to their scattered character and ignorance, but also because the fundamental organizing force of anarchically-constructed capitalist society is the spontaneously expanding national and international market.

On the contrary, in every Socialist revolution—and consequently in the Socialist revolution in Russia which we began on October 25, 1917—the principal task of the proletariat, and of the poorest peasantry which it leads, is the positive or creative work of setting up an extremely intricate and

subtle system of new organization relationships extending to the planned production and distribution of the goods required for the existence of tens of millions of people. Such a revolution can be successfully carried out only if the majority of the population, and primarily the majority of the toilers, display independent historical creative spirit Only if the proletariat and the poorest peasantry display sufficient class consciousness, devotion to ideals, self-sacrifice and perseverance will the victory of the Socialist revolution be assured. By creating a new, Soviet type of state, which gives the opportunity to all the toilers and the masses of the oppressed to take an active part in the independent building up of a new society, we solved only a small part of this *difficult problem. The principal difficulty* lies in the economic sphere, *viz.*, the introduction of the strict and universal accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods, raising the productivity of labour and *socializing* production in actual *practice.*

* * *

The development of the Bolshevik Party, which today is the governing party in Russia, very strikingly indicates the nature of the historical change we are now passing through, which represents the peculiar feature of the present political situation and which calls for a new orientation of the Soviet government, *i e*, for a new presentation of new tasks.

The first task of every party of the future is to convince the majority of the people that its program and tactics are correct. This task stood in the forefront under tsarism as well as in the period of the Chernovs' and Tseretelis' compromise with Kerensky and Kishkin This task has now been fulfilled in the main (of course, it is far from being completely fulfilled, and it can never be completely fulfilled), for, as the recent Congress of Soviets in Moscow incontrovertibly showed, the majority of the workers and peasants of Russia are obviously on the side of the Bolsheviks.

The second task that confronted our Party was to capture political power and *to suppress the resistance of the exploiters.* Nor has this task been fulfilled completely, and it cannot be ignored because the monarchists and Cadets on the one hand, and their henchmen and hangers on, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries on the other, are continuing their efforts to unite for the purpose of overthrowing the Soviet government But in the main the task of suppressing the resistance of the exploiters was fulfilled *in the period* from October 25, 1917, to (approximately) February 1918, or to the surrender of Bogayevsky *

**M P Bogayevsky* (1881 1918)—one of the leaders of the counter revolutionary Don Cossacks —*Ed*

A third task is now coming to the fore as the immediate task and one which represents the peculiar feature of the present situation, *viz.*, the task of organizing the *administration* of Russia. Of course, this task arose and we carried it out on the very next day after October 25, 1917. But up to now, inasmuch as the resistance of the exploiters still took the form of open civil war, the task of administration *could not* have become the *main*, the *central* task.

Now it has become the main and central task. We, the Bolshevik Party, have *convinced* Russia. We have *won* Russia from the rich for the poor, from the exploiters for the toilers. Now we must *administer* Russia. And the peculiar feature of the present situation, the difficulty, lies in understanding the specific character of the transition from the principal task of convincing the people and of suppressing the exploiters by military force to the principal task of *administration*.

For the first time in history a Socialist party has managed, in main outline, to fulfil the task of winning power and of suppressing the exploiters, and has managed to approach *very close* to the task of *administration*. We must prove worthy executors of this most difficult (and most grateful) task of the Socialist revolution. We must *ponder over the fact* that *in addition* to being able to convince people, in addition to being able to conquer in civil war, it is necessary to be able to do practical *organizational* work in order that the administration may be successful. It is a very difficult task, because it is a matter of organizing in a new way the most deep-rooted, the economic foundations of life of tens and tens of millions of people. And it is a very grateful task because, only *after* it has been *fulfilled* (in the principal and main outlines) will it be possible to say that Russia *has become* not only a Soviet, but also a Socialist Republic.

THE GENERAL SLOGAN OF THE MOMENT

The objective situation outlined above, which was created by the severe and unstable peace, the terrible state of ruin, the unemployment and starvation we inherited from the war and the rule of the bourgeoisie (represented by Kerensky and the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries who supported him), all this inevitably caused extreme weariness and even exhaustion among the broad masses of the toilers. These masses imperatively demand—and cannot but demand—a respite. The task of restoring the productive forces destroyed by the war and the mismanagement of the bourgeoisie comes to the fore, *viz.*, the healing of the wounds inflicted by the war, by the defeats in the war, by the profiteering of the bourgeoisie and its attempts to restore the rule of the exploiters; the eco-

nomic revival of the country, the durable maintenance of elementary order It may seem paradoxical, but in view of the objective conditions enumerated above, it is absolutely certain that at the present moment the Soviet government can ensure the transition to Socialism only if these very elementary and most elementary problems of maintaining public order can be solved practically in spite of the opposition of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist Revolutionaries In view of the concrete and specific features of the present situation, and in view of the existence of the Soviet government with its land socialization law, workers' control law, etc , the practical solution of these elementary problems and the overcoming of the organizational difficulties of the first steps towards Socialism represent two sides of the same medal

Introduce accurate and conscientious financial accounting, manage economically, do not be lazy, do not steal, observe the strictest discipline during work—it is precisely such maxims, which were justly scorned by the revolutionary proletariat when the bourgeoisie concealed its rule as an *exploiting class by these commandments that now, after the overthrow of* the bourgeoisie, are becoming the immediate and the principal slogans of the moment On the one hand, the practical application of these slogans by the masses of the toilers is the *sole* condition for the salvation of the country which has been tortured almost to death by the imperialist war and by the imperialist robbers (headed by Kerensky), on the other hand, the practical application of these slogans by the *Soviet* government, by the *methods that it employs, on the basis of its* laws, *is a necessary and sufficient* condition for the final victory of Socialism This is precisely what those who contemptuously brush aside the idea of putting such "threadbare" and "trivial" slogans in the forefront fail to understand In a small peasant country, which overthrew tsarism only a year ago and which liberated itself from the Kerenskys less than six months ago, naturally not a little of spontaneous anarchism, intensified by the brutality and savagery that accompanies every protracted and reactionary war, has remained, and moods of despair and aimless exasperation have been created And if to this we add the provocative policy of the lackeys of the bourgeoisie (the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, etc)—the prolonged and persistent efforts that had to be exerted by the best and most class-conscious workers and peasants in order to bring about a complete change in the mood of the masses and to bring them on to the proper and tried path of disciplined labour will be appreciated Only such a transition brought about by the masses of the poor (the proletarians and semi proletarians), will be able to consummate the victory over the bourgeoisie and particularly over the more stubborn and numerous peasant bourgeoisie

THE NEW PHASE OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOURGEOISIE

The bourgeoisie in our country is vanquished, but it is not yet uprooted, not yet destroyed, and not even utterly broken. That is why a new and higher form of struggle against the bourgeoisie is emerging, the transition from the very simple task of further expropriating the capitalists to the much more complicated and difficult task of creating conditions in which it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist, or for a new bourgeoisie to arise. Clearly, such a task is an immeasurably higher one than the preceding task; and it is clear also that until it is fulfilled there will be no Socialism.

If we measure our revolution by the scale of West European revolutions we will find that at the present moment we are approximately at the level reached in 1793 and 1871. We can be legitimately proud of having risen to this level, and in one respect we have certainly advanced somewhat further, namely: we have decreed and introduced in the whole of Russia the highest *type* of state—the Soviet power. But under no circumstances can we rest content with what we have achieved, because we have only just started the transition to Socialism, we have *not yet* done the most decisive thing in *this* respect.

The most decisive thing is the organization of the strictest and nation-wide accounting and control of production and of the distribution of goods. And yet, we have *not yet* introduced accounting and control in those enterprises and in those branches and sides of economy which we have confiscated from the bourgeoisie; and without this there can be no thought of creating the second and equally important material condition for the introduction of Socialism, *viz.*, increasing the productivity of labour on a national scale.

That is why the task of the present moment could not be defined in the simple formula: continue the offensive against capital. Although we have certainly not utterly routed capital and although it is certainly necessary to continue the offensive against this enemy of the toilers, such a definition would be inexact, would not be concrete, would not take into account the *peculiar feature* of the present situation in which, in order that the *future* offensive may be successful, it is necessary to "halt" the offensive *for the time being*.

This can be explained by comparing our position in the war against capital with the position of a victorious army that has captured, say, a half or two-thirds of the enemy's territory and is compelled to halt in order to collect its forces, to replenish its supplies of munitions, repair and reinforce the lines of communication, build up new bases, call up new reserves, etc. The cessation of the offensive of a victorious army under such conditions is necessary precisely in order that the remaining part of the enemy's territory may be won, *i.e.*, in order that complete victory may be

achieved Those who have failed to understand that the objective state of affairs at the present moment dictates precisely such a 'cessation" of the offensive against capital have failed to understand anything at all about the present political situation

It goes without saying that we can speak about the "cessation' of the offensive against capital only in quotation marks, *i e*, only metaphorically In ordinary war, a general order can be issued to stop the offensive, the advance can actually be stopped In the war against capital, however, the advance cannot be stopped, and there can be no thought of our abandoning the further expropriation of capital What we are discussing is the shifting of the *centre of gravity* of our economic and political work Up to now measures for the direct expropriation of the expropriators were in the *forefront* Now the organization of accounting and control in those branches of economy in which the capitalists have already been expropriated, and in all other branches of economy, is in the forefront

If we continued to expropriate capital at the same rate at which we have been doing up to now, we would certainly suffer defeat, because our work of organizing proletarian accounting and control has obviously—obviously to every thinking person—*lagged behind* the work of directly expropriating the expropriators " If we now concentrate all our efforts on the organization of accounting and control, we shall be able to solve this problem, we shall be able to make up for lost time, we shall win our 'campaign' against capital

But is not the admission that it is necessary to make up for lost time tantamount to admitting that we have committed an error? Not in the least We will again quote our military example If it is possible to defeat and push back the enemy merely with detachments of light cavalry, it should be done But if this can be done successfully only up to a certain limit, then it is quite conceivable that when this limit has been reached, it will be necessary to call up heavy artillery In admitting that it is now necessary to make up for lost time, in calling up heavy artillery, we do not admit that the successful cavalry attack was a mistake

Frequently, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie reproach us for having launched a "Red Guard' attack on capital The reproach is absurd, it is worthy of the lackeys of the money bags, because *at one time* the "Red Guard" attack on capital was absolutely dictated by circumstances in the first place capital put up military resistance through the medium of Kerensky and Krasnov, Savinkov and Gotz (Gegechkori is putting up such resistance even now), Dutov and Bogayevsky Military resistance cannot be broken except by military means, and the Red Guards fought in the noble and great historical cause of emancipating the toilers and the exploited from the yoke of the exploiters

Secondly, we could not at that time put the method of administration in the forefront in place of the methods of suppression, because the art of administration is not an art that one is born to, it is acquired by experience

creating the conditions of national accounting and control from below, which would inevitably and automatically subordinate the specialists and enlist them for our work)

Now we have had to resort to the old bourgeois method and to agree to pay a very high price for the "services" of the biggest bourgeois specialists All those who are familiar with the subject appreciate this, but not all ponder over the significance, of the measure that has been adopted by the proletarian state Clearly, such a measure is a compromise, a departure from the principles of the Paris Commune and of every proletarian state, which call for the reduction of all salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker, which call for a struggle against careerism, not in words, but in deeds

Moreover, it is clear that such a measure not only implies the cessation —in a certain field and to a certain degree—of the offensive against capital (for capital is not a sum of money, but a definite social relation), it is also *a step backward* on the part of our Socialist Soviet state power, which from the very outset proclaimed and pursued the policy of reducing high salaries to the level of the wages of the average worker

Of course, the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, particularly the small fry, such as the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn* ites and the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, will giggle over our confession that we are taking a step backward But we can afford to ignore their giggling We must study the *peculiar features of the extremely difficult and new path to Socialism* without concealing our mistakes and weaknesses, and strive in good time to do what has been left undone To conceal from the masses the fact that the enlistment of bourgeois specialists by means of extremely high salaries *is a retreat from the principles of the Paris Commune* would be tantamount to sinking to the level of bourgeois politicians and to deceiving the masses Frankly explaining how and why we took this step backward, and then publicly discussing what means are available for making up *for lost time, means educating the masses and learning from experience* together with the masses how to build up Socialism There is hardly a single victorious military campaign in history in which the victor did not commit certain mistakes, suffer partial reverses, temporarily yield something and in some places retreat The "campaign" which we have undertaken against capitalism is a million times more difficult than the most difficult military campaign, and it will be silly and disgraceful to give way to despondency because of a single and partial retreat

We will now discuss the question from the practical point of view Let us assume that the Russian Soviet Republic required one thousand first class scientists and specialists in various fields of knowledge, technology and practical experience for the purpose of supervising the labour of the people with a view to securing *the speediest possible economic revival* of the country Let us assume also that we will have to pay these "stars of the first magnitude"—of course the majority of those who shout loudest about

the corruption of the workers are themselves utterly corrupted by bourgeois morals—25,000 rubles per annum each. Let us assume that this sum (25,000,000 rubles) will have to be doubled (assuming that we have to pay bonuses for particularly successful and rapid fulfilment of the most important organizational and technical tasks), or even quadrupled (assuming that we have to enlist several hundred more exacting foreign specialists). The question is, would the expenditure of fifty or a hundred million rubles per annum by the Soviet Republic for the purpose of reorganizing the labour of the people according to the last word in science and technology be excessive or too heavy? Of course not. The overwhelming majority of the class-conscious workers and peasants will approve of this expenditure because they know from practical experience that our backwardness causes us to lose billions, and that we have *not yet* reached that degree of organization, accounting and control which calls forth the mass and voluntary participation of the "luminaries" of the bourgeois intelligentsia in *our* work.

It goes without saying that this question has another aspect. The corrupting influence of high salaries upon the Soviet government (the more so that the rapidity with which the revolution occurred could not but attract a certain number of adventurers and rogues who, together with a number of untalented or dishonest commissars, would very much like to become "star" embezzlers of state funds) and upon the masses of the workers is indisputable. But every thinking and honest worker and poor peasant will agree, will admit, that we cannot immediately rid ourselves of the bad heritage of capitalism, and that we can liberate the Soviet Republic from the duty of paying a "tribute" of fifty million or one hundred million rubles per annum (a tribute for our own backwardness in organizing *nation-wide* accounting and control *from below*) only by organizing ourselves, by tightening up discipline in our own ranks, by purging our ranks of all those who are "guarding the heritage of capitalism," who "observe the traditions of capitalism," *i.e.*, of loafers, idlers and embezzlers of state funds (now all the land, all the factories and all the railways are the "state funds" of the Soviet Republic). If the class-conscious advanced workers and poor peasants manage with the aid of the Soviet institutions to organize, become disciplined, pull themselves together, create strong labour discipline in the course of one year, then in a year's time we shall throw off this "tribute," which can be reduced even before that... in exact proportion to the successes we achieve in our workers' and peasants' labour discipline and organization. The sooner we workers and peasants learn to acquire the most efficient labour discipline and the most modern technique of labour, using the bourgeois specialists for this purpose, the sooner shall we liberate ourselves from having to pay any "tribute" to these specialists.

Our work of organizing nation-wide accounting and control of production and distribution under the supervision of the proletariat has lagged very much behind our work of directly expropriating the expropriators.

This postulate is fundamental for an understanding of the specific features of the present situation and of the tasks of the Soviet government that emerge from it. The centre of gravity of our struggle against the bourgeoisie is shifting to the organization of such accounting and control. Only if we take this as our starting point will it be possible properly to determine the immediate tasks of economic and financial policy in the sphere of nationalizing the banks, monopolizing foreign trade, the state control of money circulation, the introduction of a property and income tax satisfactory from the proletarian point of view, and the introduction of compulsory labour service.

We are extremely late in introducing Socialist reforms in these spheres (very, very important spheres), and we are late precisely because accounting and control are insufficiently organized in general. It goes without saying that this is one of the most difficult tasks, and in view of the ruin caused by the war, it can be fulfilled only over a long period of time; but we must not forget that it is precisely here that the bourgeoisie—and particularly the numerous petty and peasant bourgeoisie—is putting up the most serious fight, disrupting the control that has already been organized, disrupting the grain monopoly, for example, and is winning positions for profiteering and speculative trade. We have far from adequately carried out the things we have decreed, and the principal task of the moment is to concentrate all efforts on the businesslike, practical *realization* of the principles of the reforms which have already become embodied in law, but which have not yet become a reality.

In order to proceed further with the nationalization of the banks and to march unswervingly towards transforming the banks into nodal points of public accounting under Socialism, we must first of all, and above all, achieve real success in increasing the number of branches of the People's Bank, in attracting deposits, in simplifying the paying in and withdrawal of deposits, in abolishing queues, in catching and *shooting* bribe-takers and rogues, etc. First of all we must carry out the simplest things, properly organize what is available, and then prepare for the more intricate things.

Consolidate and regulate the state monopolies (in grain, leather, etc.) which have been introduced already, and by that prepare for the state monopoly of foreign trade. Without this monopoly we shall not be able to save ourselves from foreign capital by paying "tribute." The possibility of building up Socialism depends entirely upon whether we shall be able, by paying a certain amount of tribute to foreign capital, to safeguard our internal economic independence for a given transitional period.

We are also lagging very much behind in regard to the collection of taxes generally, and of the property and income tax in particular. The imposing of tribute upon the bourgeoisie—a measure which in principle is absolutely permissible and is worthy of proletarian approval—shows that in this respect we are still nearer to the methods of winning (Russia) from the rich for the poor than to the methods of administration. But in

order to become stronger, in order to be able to stand firmly on our feet, we must adopt the latter method, we must substitute for the tribute imposed upon the bourgeoisie the constant and regular collection of a property and income tax, which will bring a *greater* return to the proletarian state, and which calls for better organization and better accounting and control.

The fact that we are late in introducing compulsory labour service also shows that the work that is coming to the front at the present time is precisely the preparatory organizational work that will finally consolidate our gains and that is necessary in order to prepare for the operation of "surrounding" capital and compelling it to "surrender." We ought to begin introducing compulsory labour service immediately, but we ought to do so more gradually and circumspectly, testing every step by practical experience, and, of course, taking the first step by introducing compulsory labour service *for the rich*. The introduction of labour and consumers' budget books for every bourgeois, including every rural bourgeois, would be an important step towards completely "surrounding" the enemy and towards the creation of real, popular accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR NATION-WIDE ACCOUNTING AND CONTROL

The state, which for centuries has been an organ of oppression and robbery of the people, has left us a heritage of supreme hatred and suspicion on the part of the masses of everything that is connected with the state. It is very difficult to overcome this, and only a Soviet government can do it. But even a Soviet government will require plenty of time and enormous perseverance. This "heritage" particularly affects the question of accounting and control—the fundamental problem facing the Socialist revolution on the morrow of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. A certain amount of time will inevitably pass before the masses, who for the first time feel free after the overthrow of the landlords and the bourgeoisie, will understand—not from books, but from their own, *Soviet* experience—will understand and *feel* that without all-sided state accounting and control of production and distribution of goods, the power of the toilers, the freedom of the toilers, *cannot* be maintained, and that a return to the yoke of capitalism is *inevitable*.

All the habits and traditions of the bourgeoisie, and of the petty bourgeoisie in particular, also run counter to *state* control, and support the inviolability of the "sacred private property," of "sacred" private enterprise. It is now being particularly clearly demonstrated to us how correct is the Marxian postulate that anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism are *bourgeois* trends, that they irreconcilably contradict Socialism, pro-

letarian dictatorship and Communism. The fight to instil into the minds of the masses the idea of *Soviet* state control and accounting, and to carry out this idea in practice, the fight to break with the accursed past, which taught the people to regard the gaining of bread and clothes as a "private" matter, as buying and selling, as a transaction "which concerns only myself" —is a great fight of world-historical significance, a fight between Socialist consciousness and bourgeois-anarchist spontaneity. We have introduced worker's control, enforced it by law, but this law is only just beginning to be applied and is only just barely beginning to penetrate the minds of the broad masses of the proletariat. In our agitation we do not sufficiently explain that lack of accounting in the production and distribution of goods means the death of the rudiments of Socialism, means the embezzlement of state funds—for all property belongs to the state and the state is the Soviet power, the power of the majority of the toilers—we do not explain that carelessness in accounting and control is downright aiding and abetting the German and the Russian Kornilovs who can overthrow the power of the toilers *only* if we fail to master the task of accounting and control and who, with the aid of the muzhik bourgeoisie, with the aid of the Cadets, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, are "watching" us and waiting for an opportune moment to attack us. Nor do the advanced workers and peasants think and speak about this sufficiently. And until workers' control has become a fact, until the advanced workers have organized and carried out a victorious and ruthless crusade against the violators of this control, or against those who are careless in matters of control, it will be impossible to pass from the first step (from workers' control) to the second step, towards Socialism, *i.e.*, to pass on to workers' regulation of production.

The Socialist state can arise only as a network of producers' and consumers' communes, which conscientiously calculate their production and consumption, economize labour, steadily raise the productivity of labour, and thus enable the working day to be reduced to seven, six and even less hours per day. Nothing will be achieved unless the strictest, nation wide, all-embracing accounting and control of *grain and the production of grain* (and later of all other necessities) are organized Capitalism left us a heritage of mass organizations which can facilitate our transition to the mass accounting and control of the distribution of goods, *viz.*, the consumers' co operative societies. In Russia these societies are not so well developed as in the advanced countries, nevertheless, they have over ten million members. The Consumers' Co operative Society Law, passed the other day, is an extremely remarkable phenomenon, which strikingly illustrates the peculiar position and the tasks of the Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment.

The decree represents an agreement with the bourgeois co operative societies and the workers' co-operative societies which still adhere to the

bourgeois point of view. The agreement, or compromise, lies firstly in that the representatives of the institutions mentioned not only took part in discussing the decree, but actually obtained the right to a deciding vote, for the parts of the decree which were strongly opposed by these institutions were dropped. Secondly, in essence the compromise lies in that the Soviet government has abandoned the principle of no entrance fees in co-operative societies (which is the only consistently proletarian principle) and also the principle of uniting the whole of the population in a given locality *in a single* co-operative society. In retreating from this principle, which alone is a Socialist principle and which corresponds to the task of abolishing classes, the right was given to the "working class co-operative societies" (which in this case call themselves "class" societies only because they subordinate themselves to the class interests of the bourgeoisie) to continue to exist. Finally, the Soviet government's proposal to expel the bourgeoisie entirely from the management boards of the co-operative societies was also considerably modified, and the bar to membership of management boards was extended only to owners of private capitalist commercial and industrial enterprises.

Had the proletariat, operating through the Soviet government, managed to organize accounting and control on a national scale, or at least introduced the principles of such control, it would not have been necessary to enter into such compromises. Through the food departments of the Soviets, through the Soviet supply organizations, we would have organized the population into a single co-operative society directed by the proletariat—without the assistance of the bourgeois co-operative societies, without making any concession to the purely bourgeois principle which induces the workers' co-operative societies to remain workers' societies *side by side with* bourgeois societies, *instead of* subordinating these bourgeois co-operative societies entirely to themselves, merging the two together and taking the management of the society and the supervision of the consumption of the rich *in their own* hands.

In concluding such an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies, the Soviet government concretely defined its tactical tasks and its peculiar methods of operation in the present stage of development, *viz.*, by directing the bourgeois elements, utilizing them, making certain partial concessions to them, we create the conditions for further progress that will be slower than we at first anticipated, but surer, with better bases and lines of communication and better consolidation of the positions which have been won. The Soviets can (*and should*) now measure their successes in the field of Socialist construction, among other things, by extremely clear, simple and practical standards, *viz.*, in how many communes or villages, or blocks of houses, etc., co-operative societies have been organized, and to what extent their development has reached the point of embracing the whole population.

RAISING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LABOUR

In every Socialist revolution, after the proletariat has solved the problem of capturing power, and to the extent that the task of expropriating the expropriators has been carried out in the main, there necessarily comes to the forefront the fundamental task of creating a social system that is superior to capitalism, *viz.*, raising the productivity of labour, and in this connection (and for this purpose) securing better organization of labour. Our Soviet government is precisely in the position in which, thanks to the victory over the exploiters—from Kerensky to Kornilov—it is able to approach this task directly, to set to work to fulfil it. And here it becomes immediately clear that while it is possible to get control of the central government in a few days, while it is possible to suppress the military resistance and sabotage of the exploiters even in different parts of a great country in a few weeks, the permanent solution of the problem of raising the productivity of labour requires, at all events (particularly after a terrible and devastating war), several years. The protracted nature of the work is certainly dictated by objective circumstances.

The raising of the productivity of labour first of all requires that the material basis of large scale industry shall be assured, *viz.*, the development of the production of fuel, iron, the engineering and chemical industries. The Russian Soviet Republic is in the favourable position of having at its command, even after the Brest Litovsk Peace, enormous reserves of ore (in the Urals), fuel in Western Siberia (coal), in the Caucasus and the South East (oil), in the midlands (peat), enormous timber reserves, water power, raw materials for the chemical industry (Karabugaz) etc. The development of these natural resources by methods of modern technology lays the basis for the unprecedented progress of productive forces.

Another condition for enhancing the productivity of labour is, first, the raising of the educational and cultural level of the masses of the population. *This is taking place extremely rapidly, which those who are blinded* by bourgeois routine are unable to see, they are unable to understand what an urge towards light and initiative is now developing among the "lower ranks" of the people thanks to the Soviet form of organization. Secondly, a condition for economic revival is the raising of the discipline of the toilers, their skill, their dexterity, increasing the intensity of labour and improving its organization.

In this respect things are particularly bad and even hopeless if we are to believe those who allow themselves to be frightened by the bourgeoisie or by those who are serving the bourgeoisie for their own ends. These people do not understand that there has not been, nor could there be, revolution in which the supporters of the old system did not raise a howl about chaos, anarchy, etc. Naturally, among the masses who have only just thrown off an unprecedentedly savage yoke there is deep and wide-

spread seething and ferment, the working out of new principles of labour discipline is a very protracted process, and this process could not even start until complete victory had been achieved over the landlords and the bourgeoisie.

But without in the least giving way to despair, very often pretended, which is spread by the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals (who have despaired of retaining their old privileges), we must under no circumstances conceal an obvious evil. On the contrary, we shall expose it and intensify the Soviet methods of combating it, because the victory of Socialism is inconceivable without the victory of proletarian conscious discipline over spontaneous petty-bourgeois anarchy—this real guarantee of a possible restoration of Kerenskyism and Kornilovism.

The more class-conscious vanguard of the Russian proletariat has already set itself the task of raising labour discipline. For example, the Central Committee of the Metal Workers' Union and the Central Council of Trade Unions have begun to draft the necessary measures and decrees. This work must be supported and pushed forward with all speed. We must raise the question of piece work and apply and test it in practice; we must raise the question of applying much of what is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system, we must make wages correspond to the total amount of goods turned out, or to the amount of work done by the railways, the water transport system, etc., etc.

The Russian is a bad worker compared with workers of the advanced countries. Nor could it be otherwise under the tsarist regime and in view of the tenacity of the remnants of serfdom. The task that the Soviet government must set the people in all its scope is—learn to work. The Taylor system, the last word of capitalism in this respect, like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the subtle brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of its greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work, the elimination of superfluous and awkward motions, the working out of correct methods of work, the introduction of the best system of accounting and control, etc. The Soviet Republic must at all costs adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field. The possibility of building Socialism will be determined precisely by our success in combining the Soviet government and the Soviet organization of administration with the modern achievements of capitalism. We must organize in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our purposes. At the same time, in approaching the task of raising the productivity of labour, we must take into account the specific features of the transition period from capitalism to Socialism, which, on the one hand, requires that the foundations be laid of the Socialist organization of competition, and on the other hand the application of coercion, so that the slogan "dictatorship of the proletariat" shall not be desecrated by the practice of a jelly-fish proletarian government.

THE ORGANIZATION OF COMPETITION

Among the absurdities which the bourgeoisie are fond of spreading about Socialism is the argument that Socialists deny the importance of competition. As a matter of fact, it is only Socialism, which, by abolishing classes, and consequently, by abolishing the enslavement of the masses, for the first time opens the way for competition on a really mass scale. And it is precisely the Soviet form of organization, in passing from the formal democracy of the bourgeois republic to the real participation of the masses of the toilers in *administration*, that for the first time puts competition on a broad basis. It is much easier to organize this in the political field than in the economic field, but for the success of Socialism, it is precisely the latter that is important.

Take, for example, a means of organizing competition like publicity. The bourgeois republic ensures publicity only formally, as a matter of fact, it subordinates the press to capital, entertains the "mob" with sensational political trash, conceals what takes place in the workshops, in commercial transactions, contracts, etc., with a veil of "commercial secrets," which protect "the sacred right of property." The Soviet government has abolished commercial secrets, it has entered a new path, but we have done hardly anything to utilize publicity for the purpose of encouraging economic competition. While ruthlessly suppressing the lying and insolently slanderous bourgeois press, we must systematically set to work to create a press that will not entertain and fool the masses with political sensations and trivialities, but which will bring the questions of everyday economics before the court of the people and assist in the serious study of these questions. Every factory, every village, is a producers' and consumers' commune, whose right and duty it is to apply the general Soviet laws in their own way ("in their own way," not in the sense of violating them, but in the sense that they can apply them in various forms) and to solve the problems of accounting in the production and distribution of goods in their own way. *Under capitalism, this was the "private affair" of the* individual capitalist, landlord and kulak. Under the Soviet state, it is not a private affair, but an important affair of state.

And we have not yet started on the enormous, difficult, but grateful task of organizing competition between communes, of introducing accounting and publicity in the process of the production of bread, clothes and other things, of transforming dry, dead, bureaucratic accounts into living examples, both repulsive and attractive. Under the capitalist mode of production, the significance of individual example, say the example of some co-operative workshop, would inevitably be exceedingly restricted, and only those who are imbued with petty bourgeois illusions can dream of "correcting" capitalism by the force of example of good institutions. After political power has passed to the proletariat, after the expropriators have been expropriated, the situation radically changes—as prominent

Socialists have repeatedly pointed out—and force of example for the first time is able to exercise mass influence. Model communes should and will serve as educators, teachers, helping to raise the backward communes. The press must serve as an instrument of Socialist construction, give publicity to the successes achieved by the model communes in all their details, study the causes of these successes, the methods these communes employ, and on the other hand, put on the "blacklist" those communes which persist in the "traditions of capitalism," *i.e.*, anarchy, laziness, disorder and profiteering. In capitalist society, statistics were entirely a matter for "government officials," or for narrow specialists; we must carry statistics to the masses and make them popular so that the working people themselves may gradually learn to understand and see how long it is necessary to work, how much time can be allowed for rest, so that the comparison of the business results of the various communes may become a matter of general interest and study, and that the most outstanding communes may be rewarded immediately (by reducing the working day to a certain extent, raising wages, placing a larger amount of cultural or aesthetic facilities, or other values, at their disposal, etc.).

When a new class comes forward on the historical scene as the leader and guide of society, a period of strong "tossing," shocks, struggle and storm, a period of uncertain steps, experiments, wavering, hesitation in regard to the selection of new methods corresponding to the new objective circumstances, is inevitable. The moribund feudal nobility avenged themselves on the bourgeoisie which vanquished them and took their place, not only by conspiracies and attempts at rebellion and restoration, but also by pouring ridicule upon the lack of skill, the clumsiness and the mistakes of the "upstarts" and the "insolent" who dared to take hold of the "sacred helm" of state without the centuries of training which the princes, barons, nobles and dignitaries had had, in exactly the same way as the Kornilovs and Kerenskys, the Gotzes and Martovs and the whole of that fraternity of heroes of bourgeois swindling or bourgeois scepticism avenge themselves on the working class of Russia for having "dared" to take power.

Of course, not weeks, but long months and years are required in order that the new social class, and the class which up to now has been oppressed and crushed by poverty and ignorance at that, may master its new position, look around, organize its work and promote its organizers. It goes without saying that the Party which led the revolutionary proletariat could not acquire the experience and habits of large organizational undertakings embracing millions and tens of millions of citizens; the remoulding of the old, almost exclusively agitators' habits is a very long process. But there is nothing impossible in this, and as soon as the necessity for a change, is clearly appreciated, as soon as there is firm determination to make the change, and if there is perseverance in pursuing a great and difficult aim, we shall achieve it. There is an enormous amount of organizing

talent among the "people" i e, the workers and the peasants who do not exploit the labour of others Capital crushed these talented people in thousands, it killed them and threw them on the scrap heap We are not yet able to find them promote them encourage them and put them on their feet But we will learn to do so if we set about it with revolutionary enthusiasm without which there can be no victorious revolutions

No profound and mighty popular movement has ever occurred in history without scum rising to the top, without adventurers and rogues boasters and shouters attaching themselves to the inexperienced innovators without senseless fuss confusion aimless bustling without individual "leaders" trying to deal with twenty matters at once and not finishing anyone of them Let the pups of bourgeois society from Belorussov to Martov, squeal and yelp about every extra chip that is sent flying in cutting down the big old wood What else are pups for if not to yelp at the proletarian elephant? Let them yelp We shall go our road and try as carefully and as patiently as possible to test and discover real organizers, people with sober minds and a practical outlook people who combine loyalty to Socialism with ability without fuss (and in spite of bustle and fuss) to organize the strongly welded and concerted joint work of a large number of people within the framework of Soviet organization *Only* such people after testing them a score of times by transferring them from the simplest to the most difficult tasks, should be promoted to the responsible posts of leader of the people's labour, leaders of administration We have not yet learned to do this but we shall learn to do so

"HARMONIOUS ORGANIZATION" AND DICTATORSHIP

The resolution adopted by the recent Congress of Soviets in Moscow advanced as the primary task of the moment the establishment of a "harmonious organization" and the tightening of discipline Everyone now readily "votes for" and "subscribes to" resolutions of this kind, but usually people do not ponder over the fact that the application of such resolutions calls for coercion—coercion precisely in the form of dictatorship And yet it would be extremely stupid and absurdly utopian to assume that the transition from capitalism to Socialism was possible without coercion and without dictatorship Marx's theory very definitely opposed this petty bourgeois democratic and anarchist absurdity long ago And Russia of 1917 18 confirms the correctness of Marx's theory in this respect so strikingly, palpably and imposingly that only those who are hopelessly stupid or who have obstinately decided to turn their backs on the truth can be under any misapprehension concerning this Either the dictatorship of Kornilov (if we take him as the Russian type of bourgeois Cavaignac), or

the dictatorship of the proletariat—there is *no other* choice for a country which has gone through an extremely rapid development with extremely sharp turns and amidst terrible chaos created by one of the most terrible wars in history. All solutions that offer a middle path are either an attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie to deceive the people—for the bourgeoisie dare not tell the truth, dare not say that they need Kornilov—or are an expression of the stupidity of the petty-bourgeois democrats, of the Chernovs, Tseretelis and Martovs, and of their chatter about the unity of democracy, the dictatorship of democracy, the general democratic front, and similar nonsense. Those whom the progress of the Russian revolution of 1917-18 has not taught that a middle course is impossible are hopeless.

On the other hand, it is not difficult to see that in every transition from capitalism to Socialism, dictatorship is necessary for two main reasons, or along two main channels. First, capitalism cannot be defeated and eradicated, without the ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, who cannot at once be deprived of their wealth, of their superiority of organization and knowledge, and consequently for a fairly long period will inevitably try to overthrow the hated rule of the poor; secondly, every great revolution, and a Socialist revolution in particular, even if there were no external war, is inconceivable without internal war, *i.e.*, civil war, which is even more devastating than external war, and implies thousands and millions of cases of wavering and desertion from one side to another, implies a state of extreme indefiniteness, lack of equilibrium and chaos. And of course, all the elements of disintegration of the old society, which are inevitably very numerous and connected mainly with the petty bourgeoisie (because it is the petty bourgeoisie that every war and every crisis ruins first) cannot but "reveal themselves" in such periods of profound change. And these elements of disintegration *cannot* "reveal themselves" otherwise than in the increase of crime, hooliganism, corruption, profiteering and outrages of every kind. To put these down requires time and *an iron hand.*

There has not been a single great revolution in history in which the people did not instinctively realize this and did not reveal saving firmness by shooting thieves on the spot. The misfortune of previous revolutions has been that the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses, which sustained them in their state of tension and gave them the strength ruthlessly to suppress the elements of disintegration, did not last long. The social, *i.e.*, the class reason for this ephemeral character of the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses was the weakness of the proletariat, which *alone* is able (if it is sufficiently numerous, class-conscious and disciplined) to win over to its side the majority of the working people and exploited (the majority of the poor, to speak more simply and popularly) and retain power sufficiently long to enable it utterly to suppress all the exploiters as well as all the elements of disintegration.

It was this historical experience of all revolutions, it was this world-historical—economic and political—lesson that Marx confirmed in giving his short, sharp, concise and striking formula dictatorship of the proletariat And the fact that the Russian revolution set to work to fulfil this world historical task correctly *has been proved* by the victorious progress of the Soviet form of organization among all the peoples and tongues of Russia For Soviet power is nothing more nor less than the organizational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the advanced class, which raises tens and tens of millions of toilers and exploited—who by their own experience learn to regard the disciplined and class conscious vanguard of the proletariat as their reliable leader—to a new democracy and to independent participation in the administration of the state

But dictatorship is a big word, and big words should not be thrown about carelessly Dictatorship is iron rule government that is revolutionarily bold, swift and ruthless in suppressing the exploiters as well as hooligans But our government is incredibly mild, very often it resembles jelly more than iron We must not forget for a moment that the bourgeois and petty bourgeois elements are fighting against the Soviet government in two ways on the one hand, they are operating from outside, by the methods of the Savinkovs, Gotzes, Gegechkoris and Kornilovs, by conspiracies and rebellions, and by their filthy "ideological" reflection, the flood of lies and slander in the Cadet, Right Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik press, on the other hand, these elements operate from within and take advantage of every element of disintegration, of every weakness, in order to bribe, to increase indiscipline, laxity and chaos The nearer we approach the complete military suppression of the bourgeoisie, the more dangerous do the elements of petty-bourgeois anarchy become And the fight against these elements cannot be waged solely with the aid of propaganda and agitation, solely by organizing competition and by choosing organizers The struggle must also be waged by means of coercion

In proportion as the fundamental task [illegible] military suppression but administration, [illegible] pression and coercion will be, not shootin[illegible] In this respect also the revolutionary masses after October 25, 1917, entered the right path and demonstrated the virility of the revolution by setting up their own workers' and peasants' courts, even before the decrees dissolving the bourgeois bureaucratic juridical apparatus were passed But our revolutionary and people's courts are extremely, incredibly weak One feels that we have not yet changed the people's attitude towards the courts as towards something official and alien, an attitude inherited from the yoke of the landlords and of the bourgeoisie It is not yet sufficiently realized that the court is an organ which enlists the whole of the poor in the work of state administration (for the work of the courts is one of the functions of state administration), that the court is an *organ* of govern

ment of the proletariat and of the poorest peasants, that the court is an *instrument for inculcating discipline.* There is not yet sufficient appreciation of the simple and obvious fact that if the principal misfortunes of Russia at the present time are hunger and unemployment, these misfortunes cannot be overcome by spurts, but only by all-sided, all-embracing nation-wide organization and discipline in order to increase the output of food for the people and food for industry (fuel), to transport these in proper time to the places where they are required, and to distribute them properly; and it is not fully appreciated that it is *those* who violate labour discipline in any undertaking, in any matter, who are *responsible* for the starvation and unemployment, that the guilty one must be found, tried before the court, and ruthlessly punished. The petty-bourgeois elements against which we must now wage a persistent struggle manifest themselves precisely in the failure to appreciate the national economic and political connection between starvation and unemployment and general laxity in matters of organization and discipline—in the tenacity of the *small-proprietor outlook, viz.*, I'll grab all I can for myself; what do I care about the rest?

In the railway transport service, which perhaps most strikingly embodies the economic ties of the organism created by large-scale capitalist production, the struggle between the petty-bourgeois elements of laxity and proletarian organization manifests itself in striking relief. The "administration" element provides a host of saboteurs and bribe-takers; the best part of the proletarian element fights for discipline; but among both elements there are, of course, many waverers and "weak" characters who are unable to withstand the temptation of profiteering, bribery, personal gain obtained by spoiling the whole apparatus—upon the proper working of which the victory over starvation and unemployment depends.

The struggle that is developing around the recent decree on the management of the railways, the decree which grants individual executives dictatorial powers (or "unlimited" powers) is characteristic. The conscious representatives of petty-bourgeois laxity (in all probability most of them are unconscious representatives) would like to see in this granting of "unlimited" (*i.e.*, dictatorial) powers to individual persons a departure from the collegiate principle, from democracy and from other principles of Soviet government. Here and there, among Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, a positively hooligan agitation, *i.e.*, agitation appealing to the base instincts and to the small proprietor's striving to "grab all he can" has been developed against the dictatorship decree. The question has become one of really enormous significance: first, the question of principle, *viz.*, is the appointment of individual persons, dictators with unlimited powers, in general compatible with the fundamental principles of Soviet government? Secondly, what relation has this case—this precedent, if you will—to the special tasks of the government in the present concrete

situation? We must deal very attentively with both these questions.

The irrefutable experience of history has shown that in the history of revolutionary movements the dictatorship of individual persons was very often the vehicle, the channel of the dictatorship of the revolutionary classes. Undoubtedly, the dictatorship of individual persons was compatible with bourgeois democracy. But at this point in their abuse of the Soviet government, the bourgeoisie, as well as their petty-bourgeois henchmen, always display remarkable legerdemain: on the one hand, they declare the Soviet government to be something absurd and anarchistically savage, and they carefully evade all our historical examples and theoretical arguments which prove that the Soviets are a higher form of democracy, and even more, the beginning of the *Socialist* form of democracy; on the other hand, they demand of us a higher democracy than bourgeois democracy and say: personal dictatorship is absolutely incompatible with your, Bolshevik (*i.e.*, not bourgeois, but *Socialist*) Soviet democracy.

These are very poor arguments. If we are not anarchists, we must admit that the state, *i.e.*, *coercion*, is necessary for the transition from capitalism to Socialism. The form of coercion is determined by the degree of development of the given revolutionary class, and also by special circumstances, such as, for example, the heritage of a long and reactionary war and the forms of resistance put up by the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie. Hence, there is absolutely no contradiction in principle between Soviet (*i.e.*, Socialist) democracy and the exercise of dictatorial powers by individual persons. The difference between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois dictatorship is that the former strikes at the exploiting minority in the interests of the exploited majority, and that it is exercised—also through *individual* persons—not only by the masses of the toilers and exploited, but also by organizations which are built in such a way as to rouse among these masses the historical creative spirit. The Soviet organizations are organizations of this kind.

In regard to the second question concerning the significance of precisely individual dictatorial powers from the point of view of the specific tasks of the present moment, it must be said that large-scale machine industry—which is precisely the material productive source and foundation of Socialism—calls for absolute and strict unity of will, which directs the joint labours of hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of people. The technical, economic and historical necessity of this is obvious, and all those who have thought about Socialism have always regarded it as one of the conditions of Socialism. But how can strict unity of will be ensured? By thousands subordinating their will to the will of one.

Given ideal class consciousness and discipline on the part of those taking part in the common work, this subordination would more than anything remind one of the mild leadership of a conductor of an orchestra. It

may assume the sharp forms of a dictatorship if ideal discipline and class consciousness are lacking. But be that as it may, *unquestioning submission* to a single will is absolutely necessary for the success of labour processes that are based on large-scale machine industry. On the railways it is twice and three times as necessary. This transition from one political task to another, which *on the surface* is totally dissimilar to the first, represents the peculiar feature of the present situation. The revolution has only just broken the oldest, most durable and heaviest fetters to which the masses were compelled to submit. That was yesterday. But today the same revolution demands, in the interests of Socialism, that the masses *unquestioningly obey the single will* of the leaders of the labour process. Of course, such a transition cannot be made at one step. It can be achieved only as a result of tremendous jolts, shocks, reversions to old forms, the enormous exertion of effort on the part of the proletarian vanguard, which is leading the people to the new society. Those who drop into the philistine hysterics of *Novaya Zhizn*, *Vperyod* (*Forward*), *Dyelo Naroda* and *Nash Vek* (*Our Age*)* do not stop to think about this.

Take the psychology of the average rank-and-file representative of the toiling and exploited masses; compare it with the objective, material conditions of his social life. Before the October Revolution he did *not* see any real effort on the part of the propertied exploiting classes to make any real sacrifice for him, to do anything for his benefit. He did *not* see any attempt to give him land, liberty and peace that had been repeatedly promised him, any sacrifice of "Great Power" interests and of the interests of Great Power secret treaties, sacrifice of capital and profits. He saw this only after October 25, 1917, when he took this himself by force, and had to defend what he had taken by force from the Kerenskys, the Gotzes, the Gegechkoris, Dutovs and Kornilovs. Naturally, for a certain time, all his attention, all his thoughts, all his efforts, were concentrated on taking breath, on unbending his back, on looking around, on taking the benefits of life which became immediately accessible and which the overthrown exploiters had never given him. Of course, a certain amount of time was required to enable the rank-and-file representative of the masses not only to see for himself, not only to become convinced, but also to feel that it was not good simply to "take," snatch, grab things, that this led to increased chaos and ruin, to the return of the Kornilovs. The corresponding change in the conditions of life (and consequently in the psychology) of the rank-and-file toiling masses is only just beginning. And our task, the task of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which is the class-conscious spokesman of the strivings of the exploited for emancipation, is to appreciate this change, to understand that it is necessary, to

---

* *Novaya Zhizn* and *Vperyod*—Menshevik organs; *Dyelo Naroda*—a newspaper published by the Socialist-Revolutionaries; *Nash Vek*—a newspaper published by the Constitutional-Democrats.—*Ed.*

take the lead of the exhausted masses who are wearily seeking a way out and lead them along the true path, along the path of labour discipline, along the path of co ordinating the task of discussing at mass meetings the conditions of labour, with the task of unquestioningly obeying the will of the Soviet leader, of the dictator, *during work time*

The "mania for meetings" is an object of the ridicule, and still more often of the spiteful hisses of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks, the *Novaya Zhizn*-ites, who see only the chaos, the confusion and the outbursts of small proprietor egoism But without the discussions at public meetings the masses of the oppressed could never have gone over from the compulsory discipline of the exploiters to class conscious, voluntary discipline The airing of questions at public meetings is—there you have the genuine democracy of the toilers, their way of unbending their backs, their awakening to a new life, their first steps along the road which they themselves have cleared of vipers (the exploiters, the imperialists, the landlords and capitalists) and which they want to learn to build themselves, in their own way, for themselves, on the principles of their own "Soviet" and not alien, not aristocratic, not bourgeois rule It required precisely the October victory of the toilers over the exploiters, it required a whole historical period in which the toilers themselves could first of all discuss the new conditions of life and the new tasks, in order to make possible the durable transition to superior forms of labour discipline, to the intelligent appreciation of the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to unquestioning obedience to the orders of individual representatives of the Soviet government during work time

This transition has now commenced

We have successfully fulfilled the first task of the revolution, we have seen how the masses of the toilers created the fundamental condition for its success unity of effort against the exploiters in order to overthrow them, Stages like that of October 1905, February and October 1917 are of world historical significance

We have sucessfully fulfilled the second task of the revolution to awaken, to raise precisely those social "lower ranks" whom the exploiters had pushed down, and who only after October 25, 1917, obtained complete freedom to overthrow the exploiters and to begin to take stock of things and organize matters in their own way The airing of questions at public meetings of precisely the most oppressed and downtrodden, of the least educated masses of the toilers, their going over to the side of the Bolsheviks, their establishment everywhere of their own Soviet organization—this was the second great stage of the revolution

The third stage is now beginning We must consolidate what we ourselves have won, what we have decreed, made law, discussed, planned—consolidate them in durable forms of *everyday labour discipline* This is a very difficult, but a very grateful task, because its fulfilment alone will give

us Socialist conditions. We must learn to combine the "public meeting" democracy of the toiling masses—turbulent, surging, overflowing its banks like a spring flood—with *iron* discipline while at work, with *unquestioning obedience* to the will of a single person, the Soviet leader, while at work.

We have not yet learned to do this.

We shall learn to do so.

Yesterday we were menaced with the restoration of bourgeois exploitation personified by the Kornilovs, Gotzes, Dutovs, Gegechkoris and Bogayevskys. We vanquished them. This restoration, this very same restoration menaces us today in another form, in the form of the element of petty-bourgeois laxity and anarchism, or small-proprietor "it's not my business" psychology, in the form of the daily, petty, but numerous sorties and attacks of these elements against proletarian discipline. We must vanquish this element of petty-bourgeois anarchy, and we shall vanquish it.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET ORGANIZATION

The Socialist character of Soviet, *i.e., proletarian*, democracy, as concretely applied today, lies first in that the electors are the toiling and exploited masses; the bourgeoisie is excluded. Secondly, it lies in the fact that all bureaucratic formalism and restriction of elections are abolished; the masses themselves determine the order and time of elections, and every elected person is liable to recall. Thirdly, it lies in the fact that the best mass organization of the vanguard of the toilers, *i.e.*, the proletariat engaged in large-scale industry, is created, which enables it to lead the vast masses of the exploited, to draw them into independent political life, to educate them politically by their own experience and in that for the first time a start is thus made in teaching the *whole* of the population the art of administration, and in their beginning to administer.

Such are the principal distinguishing features of the democracy which is being applied in Russia, which is a higher type of democracy, a break with the bourgeois distortion of democracy, its transition to Socialist democracy and to the conditions in which the state can begin to wither away.

It goes without saying that the elements of petty-bourgeois disorganization (which must *inevitably* manifest itself to some extent in every proletarian revolution, and which manifests itself particularly in our revolution, owing to the petty-bourgeois character of our country, its backwardness and the consequences of a reactionary war) cannot but leave their impress upon the Soviets.

We must work tirelessly to develop the organization of the Soviets and of the Soviet government. There is a petty-bourgeois tendency to transform

the members of the Soviets into "Members of Parliament," or into bureaucrats This must be combated by drawing *all* the members of the Soviets into the practical work of administration In many places the departments of the Soviets are gradually becoming merged with the Commissariats. Our aim is to draw *the whole of the poor* into the practical work of administration, and every step that is taken in this direction—the more varied they are, the better—should be carefully recorded, studied, systematized, tested by wider experience and passed into law Our aim is to ensure that *every* toiler, after having finished his eight hours' "lesson" in productive labour, shall perform state duties *gratis* the transition to this is a particularly difficult one, but this transition alone can guarantee the final consolidation of Socialism Naturally, the novelty and difficulty of the change give rise to an abundance of steps taken, as it were, gropingly, to an abundance of mistakes and vacillations—without this, rapid progress is impossible. The reason why the present position seems peculiar to many of those who would like to be regarded as Socialists is that they have been accustomed to contrasting capitalism to Socialism abstractly and that they profoundly put between the two the word "leap" (some of them, recalling fragments of what they have read of Engels' writings, still more profoundly add the phrase "leap from the kingdom of necessity into the kingdom of liberty") The majority of these so called Socialists, who have "read about Socialism in books," but who have never seriously understood it, have never stopped to think that by "leap" the teachers of Socialism meant changes in world history, and that leaps of this kind extended over periods of ten years and even more Naturally, in such times, the notorious "intelligentsia" provide an infinite number of mourners of the dead Some mourn over the Constituent Assembly, others mourn over bourgeois discipline, others again mourn over the capitalist system, still others mourn over the cultured landlord, and still others again mourn over imperial grandeur, etc , etc

The real interest of the epoch of great leaps lies in that the abundance of fragments of the old, which sometimes accumulate much more rapidly than the rudiments (not always immediately discernible) of the new, calls for the ability to discern what is most important in the line or chain of development. Historical moments arise when the most important thing for the success of the revolution is to heap up as large a quantity of the fragments as possible, i e , to blow up as many of the old institutions as possible, moments arise when enough has been blown up and the next task is to perform the "prosaic" (for the petty-bourgeois revolutionary, the "boring") work of clearing away the fragments; and moments arise when the careful nursing of the rudiments of the new system, which are growing out of the wreckage on a soil which as yet has been badly cleared of rubble, is the most important thing.

It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of Socialism or a Communist in general. One must be able at each particular moment to

find the particular link in the chain which one must grasp with all one's might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, their difference from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as senseless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.

The fight against the bureaucratic distortion of the Soviet form of organization is made secure by the firmness of the connection between the Soviets and the "people," meaning by that the toilers and exploited, and by the flexibility and elasticity of this connection. Even in the most democratic capitalist republics in the world, the poor never regard the bourgeois parliament as "their own" institution. But the Soviets are "their own" and not alien institutions to the masses of workers and peasants. The contemporary "Social-Democrats" of the Scheidemann or, what is almost the same thing, of the Martov type, are repelled by the Soviets, and they are drawn towards the respectable bourgeois parliament, or to the Constituent Assembly as much as Turgenev,* sixty years ago, was drawn towards a moderate monarchist and aristocratic Constitution and was repelled by the muzhik democracy of Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky.

It is precisely the closeness of the Soviets to the "people," to the toilers, that creates the special forms of recall and control from below which must be most zealously developed now. For example, the Councils of public education, as periodical conferences of Soviet electors and their delegates called to discuss and control the activities of the Soviet authorities in the given field, are deserving of full sympathy and support. Nothing would be sillier than to transform the Soviets into something congealed and self-contained. The more resolutely we now have to stand for a ruthlessly firm government, for the dictatorship of individual persons, *for definite processes of work*, for definite aspects of *purely executive* functions, the more varied must be the forms and methods of control from below in order to counteract every shadow of possibility of distorting the Soviet power, in order repeatedly and tirelessly to weed out bureaucracy.

CONCLUSION

An extraordinarily difficult and dangerous situation in international affairs; the necessity of manoeuvring and retreating; a period of waiting for new outbreaks of the revolution which is maturing in the West at a

* *I. S. Turgenev* (1818-83)—celebrated Russian writer who expressed the protest of the progressive elements of Russian society against serfdom. However, in the struggle between the two camps which flared up in the Russian social movement in the fifties and sixties of the last century—the revolutionary-democratic camp, of which Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky were the most prominent ideologists, and the liberal-conservative camp—Turgenev sided with the latter.—*Ed.*

painfully slow pace, within the country a period of slow construction and ruthless "tightening up," of prolonged and persistent struggle waged by stern, proletarian discipline against the menacing element of petty bourgeois laxity and anarchy—such in brief are the distinguishing features of the special stage of the Socialist revolution we are now living in Such is the link in the historical chain of events which we must at present grasp with all our might in order to be able to cope with the tasks that confront us before passing to the next link which is attracting us by its particular brightness, the brightness of the victory of the international proletarian revolution

Try to compare the slogans that arise from the specific conditions of the present stage, *viz* , manoeuvre, retreat, wait, build slowly, ruthlessly tighten up, rigorously discipline, smash laxity—with the ordinary everyday concept "revolutionary" Is it surprising that when certain "revolutionaries" hear this they are filled with noble indignation and begin to "thunder" abuse at us for forgetting the traditions of the October Revolution, for compromising with the bourgeois specialists, for compromising with the bourgeoisie, for being petty bourgeois, reformists, etc , etc ?

The misfortune of these sorry "revolutionaries" is that even those who are prompted by the best motives in the world and are absolutely loyal to the cause of Socialism fail to understand the particular, and "particularly unpleasant," state that a backward country, which has been tortured by a reactionary and disastrous war and which began the Socialist revolution long before the more advanced countries, has to pass through, they lack stamina in the difficult moments of a difficult transition Naturally, it is the "Left Socialist Revolutionaries" who are acting as an "official" opposition of *this* kind against our Party Of course, there are and always will be individual exceptions in groups and class types But social types remain In the land in which the small proprietor population greatly predominates over the purely proletarian population, the difference between the proletarian revolutionary and petty bourgeois revolutionary will inevitably make itself felt, and from time to time will make itself very sharply felt The petty bourgeois revolutionary wavers and vacillates at every turn of events, he is an ardent revolutionary in March 1917 and praises "coalitions" in May, hates the Bolsheviks (or laments over their "adventurism") in July and turns away from them in fear at the end of October, supports them in December, and finally in March and April 1918 such types, more often than not, turn up their noses contemptuously and say "I am not one of those who sing hymns to 'organic' work, to practicalness and gradualness "

The social source of these types is the small master who has been driven to frenzy by the horrors of war, the sudden ruin the unprecedented torments of starvation and destruction, who hysterically rushes from place to place seeking a way out, seeking salvation, places his confidence in the proletariat and supports it at one moment and gives way to fits of despair

at another. We must clearly understand and fully appreciate the fact that Socialism cannot be built on such a social basis. The only class that can lead the toilers and the exploited masses is the class that unswervingly marches along its path without losing courage and without giving way to despair even at the most difficult, arduous and dangerous crossings. Fits of hysteria are of no use to us. What we need is the steady march of the iron battalions of the proletariat.

Izvestia No. 85,
April 28, 1918

THE PERIOD OF FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION AND CIVIL WAR

THE FAMINE

A Letter to the Workers of Petrograd

Comrades, the other day I received a visit from your delegate, a Party comrade, a worker in the Putilov Works. This comrade drew a detailed and extremely harrowing picture of the food shortage in Petrograd. We all know that the food situation is just as acute in a number of the industrial provinces, that starvation is knocking just as menacingly at the door of the workers and the poor generally.

And side by side with this we observe an orgy of profiteering in grain and other food products. The famine is not due to the fact that there is no bread in Russia, but to the fact that the bourgeoisie and the rich generally are putting up a last decisive fight against the rule of the toilers, against the state of the workers, against the Soviet government, on this most important and acute of questions, the question of bread. The bourgeoisie and the rich generally, including the rural rich, the kulaks, are doing their best to thwart the grain monopoly; they are dislocating the distribution of grain undertaken by the state for the purpose of supplying bread to the population, and in the first place to the workers, the toilers, the needy. The bourgeoisie are disrupting the fixed prices, they are profiteering in grain, they are making a hundred, two hundred and more rubles profit on every pood of grain; they are undermining the grain monopoly and the proper distribution of grain by resorting to bribery and corruption and by maliciously supporting everything tending to destroy the power of the workers, which is endeavouring to put into effect the prime, basic and root principle of Socialism: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

"He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—that is comprehensible to every toiler. Every worker, every poor peasant, even every middle peasant, everybody who has suffered need in his lifetime, everybody who has ever lived by his own labour, is in agreement with this. Nine-tenths of the population of Russia are in agreement with this truth. In this simple, elementary and obvious truth lies the basis of Socialism, the indestructible source of its strength, the indelible pledge of its final victory.

But the whole point of the matter is that it is one thing to subscribe to this truth, to swear one's allegiance to it, to give it verbal recognition, but it is another to be able to put it into effect When thousands and millions of people are suffering the pangs of hunger (in Petrograd, in the non agricultural provinces and in Moscow) in a country where millions and millions of poods of grain are being concealed by the rich, the kulaks and the profiteers—in a country which calls itself a Socialist Soviet Republic—there is matter for the most serious and profound thought on the part of every enlightened worker and peasant

"He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—how is this to be put into effect? It is as clear as daylight that in order to put it into effect we require, firstly, a state grain monopoly, *i e* , the absolute prohibition of all private trade in grain, the compulsory delivery of all surplus grain to the state at a fixed price, the absolute prohibition of all withholding and concealment of surplus grain, no matter by whom Secondly, we require the strictest registration of all grain surpluses, the irreproachable organization of the transport of grain from places of abundance to places of shortage, and the creation of reserves for consumption, for manufacturing purposes and for seed Thirdly, we require a just and proper distribution of bread, controlled by the workers' state, the proletarian state, among all the citizens of the state, a distribution which will permit of no privileges and advantages for the rich

One has only to reflect ever so slightly on these conditions for coping with the famine to realize the abysmal stupidity of the contemptible anarchist windbags, who deny the necessity of a state power (and, what is more, a power which will be ruthless in its severity towards the bourgeoisie and ruthlessly firm towards disorganizers) for the transition from capitalism to Communism and for the emancipation of the working people from all forms of oppression and exploitation It is at this moment, when our revolution is directly tackling the concrete and practical tasks involved in the realization of Socialism—and therein lies its indelible merit—it is at this moment, and in connection with this most important of questions, the question of bread, that the need becomes absolutely clear for an iron revolutionary government, for a dictatorship of the proletariat, for the organized collection of products, for their transport and distribution on a mass, national scale, a distribution which will take into account the requirements of tens and hundreds of millions of people, which will calculate the conditions and the results of production for a year and many years ahead (for there are sometimes years of bad harvest, there are methods of land improvement essential for increasing grain crops which require years of work, and so forth)

Romanov and Kerensky bequeathed to the working class a country utterly impoverished by their predatory, criminal and most burdensome war, a country picked clean by Russian and foreign imperialists Food will suffice for all only if we keep the strictest account of every pood, only if

every pound is distributed absolutely systematically. There is also an acute shortage of food for machines, *i.e.*, fuel: the railroads and factories will come to a standstill, unemployment and famine will bring ruin on the whole nation, if we do not bend every effort to establish a strict and ruthless economy of consumption and proper distribution. We are faced by disaster, it has drawn terribly near. An intolerably severe May will be followed by a still more severe June, July and August.

Our state grain monopoly exists in law, but in practice it is being thwarted at every step by the bourgeoisie. The rural rich, the kulak, the parasite who has been robbing the whole neighbourhood for decades, prefers to enrich himself by profiteering and illicit distilling: that, you see, is so advantageous for his pocket, while he throws the blame for the famine on the Soviet government. That, too, is the line of the political defenders of the kulak, the Cadets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who are overtly and covertly "working" against the grain monopoly and against the Soviet government. The party of spineless individuals, *i.e.*, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, are displaying their spinelessness here too: they are giving way to the covetous howls and outcries of the bourgeoisie, they are crying out against the grain monopoly, they are "protesting" against the food dictatorship, they are allowing themselves to be intimidated by the bourgeoisie, they are afraid to fight the kulak, and are hysterically tossing hither and thither, recommending that the fixed prices be raised, that private trading be sanctioned, and so forth.

This party of spineless individuals reflects in politics very much of what takes place in ordinary life when the kulak incites the poor peasants against the Soviets, bribes them by, say, letting some poor peasant have a pood of grain not for six, but for three rubles, so that the poor peasant, thus corrupted, may himself "make a bit" by profiteering, "turn a penny" by selling that pood of grain at a profiteering price of one hundred and fifty rubles, and himself become a decrier of the Soviets, which have prohibited private trading in grain.

Whoever is capable of reflecting, whoever is desirous of reflecting ever so little, will see clearly what line this fight has taken.

Either the advanced and enlightened workers triumph and unite around themselves the poor peasant masses, establish rigid order, a mercilessly severe rule, a genuine dictatorship of the proletariat—either they compel the kulak to submit, and institute a proper distribution of food and fuel on a national scale; or the bourgeoisie, with the help of the kulaks, and with the indirect support of the spineless and muddle-headed (the anarchists and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries), overthrow the Soviet power and set up a Russo-German or a Russo-Japanese Kornilov, who will present the people with a sixteen-hour working day, two ounces of bread per week, mass shooting of workers and third degree methods, as has been the case in Finland and the Ukraine,

Either—or

There is no middle course

The situation of the country is desperate in the extreme

Whoever gives a thought to political life cannot but see that the Cadets, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks are coming to an understanding as to who would be "pleasanter," a Russo German or a Russo-Japanese Kornilov, as to who would crush the revolution more effectively and reliably, a crowned or a republican Kornilov.

It is time all enlightened and advanced workers came to an understanding It is time they pulled themselves together and realized that every minute's delay may spell ruin to the country and ruin to the revolution

Half-measures will be of no avail Complaining will lead us nowhere Attempts to secure food and fuel "in retail fashion," each man for himself, i e, for his "own" factory, his "own" workshop, will only increase the disorganization and assist the avaricious, filthy and dastardly work of the profiteers

That is why, comrades, workers of Petrograd, I have taken the liberty of addressing this letter to you Petrograd is not Russia. The Petrograd workers are only a small part of the workers of Russia But they are one of the best, most advanced, most class conscious, most revolutionary, most steadfast detachments of the working class and of all the working people of Russia, and one of the least liable to succumb to empty phrases, to weak willed despair and to the intimidation of the bourgeoisie And it has frequently happened at critical moments in the life of a nation that even small advanced detachments of advanced classes have drawn the rest after them, have fired the masses with revolutionary enthusiasm and have accomplished tremendous historic feats

"There were forty thousand of us at the Putilov Works," the delegate *from the Petrograd workers said to me "But the majority of them were* 'temporary' workers, not proletarians, an unreliable, flabby lot Fifteen thousand are now left, but these are proletarians, tried and steeled in the fight"

That is the sort of vanguard of the revolution—in Petrograd and throughout the country—that must sound the call, that must *rise in their mass*, that must understand that the salvation of the country is in their hands, that from them is demanded a heroism no less than that which they displayed in January and October 1905 and in February and October 1917, that a great "*crusade*" must be organized against the food profiteers, the kulaks, the parasites, the disorganizers and bribe-takers, a great "*crusade*" against the violators of strict state order in the collection, transport and distribution of food for the people and food for the machines.

The country and the revolution can be saved only by the mass effort of the advanced workers. We need tens of thousands of advanced and steeled proletarians, enlightened enough to explain matters to the millions of poor peasants all over the country and to assume the leadership of these millions, tempered enough to ruthlessly cast out of their midst and shoot all who allow themselves to be "tempted"—as indeed happens—by the temptations of profiteering and to be tansformed from fighters for the cause of the people into robbers, steadfast enough and devoted enough to the revolution to bear in an organized way all the hardships of the *crusade* into every corner of the country for the establishment of order, for the consolidation of the local organs of Soviet government and for the exercise of control in the localities over every pood of grain and every pood of fuel.

It is far more difficult to do this than to display heroism for a few days without leaving the place one is accustomed to, without joining in a crusade, simply in a spasmodic uprising against the idiot monster Romanov or the fool and braggart Kerensky. Heroism displayed in prolonged and stubborn organizational work on a national scale is immeasurably more difficult than, but at the same time immeasurably superior to, heroism displayed in an uprising. But it has always been the strength of working-class parties and of the working class that they look danger boldly, firmly and squarely in the face, that they do not fear to admit danger and soberly weigh the forces in their "own" camp and in the camp of the "enemy," the camp of the exploiters. The revolution is progressing, developing and growing. The problems that face us are also growing. The struggle is broadening and deepening. Proper distribution of food and fuel, their procurement in greater quantities and their strict registration and control *by the workers* on a national scale—that is the real and chief gate to Socialism. That is no longer a task of "revolution in general" but a *Communist* task, a task which requires that the working people and the poor offer determined battle to capitalism.

And it is a battle worth devoting all one's strength to; its difficulties are immense, but so is the cause of the abolition of oppression and exploitation for which we are fighting.

When the people are starving, when unemployment is becoming ever more menacing, anyone who conceals an extra pood of grain, anyone who deprives the state of a pood of fuel is an out-and-out criminal.

At such a time—and for a truly Communist society this is always true—every pood of grain and fuel is veritably sacred, much more so than the sacred things which priests use to confuse the minds of fools, promising them the kingdom of heaven as a reward for slavery on earth. And in order to rid this genuinely sacred thing of every remnant of the "sacredness" of the priests, we must *take possession of it practically*, we must achieve its proper distribution *in practice*, we must collect the whole of it without exception, every particle of surplus grain must be brought into the state

reserves, *the whole country must be swept clean* of concealed or ungarnered grain surpluses, we need the firm hand of the worker to harness every effort, to increase the output of fuel and to secure the greatest economy and the greatest efficiency in the transport and consumption of fuel.

We need a mass "crusade" of the advanced workers to every centre of production of grain and fuel, to every important centre where they are transported and distributed, a mass "crusade" to increase the intensity of work tenfold, to assist the local organs of Soviet government in the matter of registration and control, and to eradicate profiteering, graft and slovenliness by armed force This is not a new problem History, properly speaking, is not creating new problems—all it is doing is to increase the size and scope of the old problems as the scope of the revolution, its difficulties and the grandeur of its historic aims, increase.

One of the great and indelible features of the October Revolution—the Soviet revolution—is that the advanced worker, *as the leader* of the poor, *as the captain* of the toiling masses of the countryside, *as the builder of the state of the toilers*, has gone among the "people" Petrograd and other proletarian centres have given thousands and thousands of their best workers to the countryside The detachments of fighters against Kaledin and Dutov,* and the food detachments, are nothing new! Only the proximity of disaster, the acuteness of the situation compel us to do *ten times more* than before.

When the worker became the vanguard leader of the poor he did not thereby become a saint He led the people forward, but he also became infected with the diseases of petty-bourgeois disintegration The fewer the detachments of best organized, of most enlightened and most disciplined and steadfast workers were, the more frequently did these detachments degenerate, the more frequently did the small owner instincts of the past triumph over the proletarian Communist consciousness of the future.

Though the working class has begun the Communist revolution, it cannot instantly discard the weaknesses and vices inherited from the society of landlords and capitalists, the society of exploiters and parasites, the society based on the filthy cupidity and personal gain of a few and the poverty of the many. But the working class can defeat the old world—*and in the end will certainly and inevitably defeat the old world*—with its vices and weaknesses, if against the enemy are brought ever greater and stronger detachments of workers, ever more enlightened by experience and tempered by the hardships of the struggle.

**A I Dutov* (1864 1921)—Ex Colonel of the General Staff of the Russian Army, Ataman of the Orenburg Cossacks who operated in the Urals against the Soviet government —*Ed*

Such is the state of affairs in Russia today. Single-handed and disunited we shall never be able to cope with famine and unemployment. We need a mass "crusade" of advanced workers to every corner of this vast country. We need ten times more *iron detachments* of the proletariat, enlightened and boundlessly devoted to Communism. Then we shall triumph over hunger and unemployment. Then we shall advance the revolution to the real gates of Socialism, and then too we shall be in a position to conduct a triumphant war of defence against the imperialist plunderers.

Published in *Pravda* No. 101,
May 24, 1918

TO ALL PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT SOVIETS OF DEPUTIES

How to act if the enemy attacks the Russian Soviet Socialist Federative Republic, which has demonstrated its firm desire for peace

(Instructions to all local Soviets of Deputies and to the population in general)

Time and again before have the workers and peasants of the Ukraine resisted the removal or destruction of property in the hope of preserving it for themselves They were cruelly punished for it. The intruders seized and carried off everything grain, cattle, coal, metal and machinery. The experience of the Ukraine should serve as a dire lesson to the whole of Russia

Accordingly, should the enemy attempt to pass to the offensive, it is the duty of the local population, under the direction of their Soviets, strictly to observe the following order:

In the first place evacuate military stores Everything that cannot be evacuated should be burnt or blown up

Remove grain and flour or bury it in the ground. What cannot be buried must be destroyed.

Remove all cattle.

Evacuate machinery, entire or dismantled If it cannot be evacuated destroy it.

Metals which cannot be removed shall be buried in the ground.

Send ahead locomotives and railway waggons.

Dismantle rails.

Mine and blow up bridges.

Set fire to forests and crops in the enemy's rear

Hamper the advance of the enemy in every way you can. Lay ambushes. Act with firearms and cold steel.

Protect your rear. And for that purpose completely exterminate all spies, provocateurs, Whiteguards and counter-revolutionary traitors who render direct or indirect assistance to the enemy.

J. Sverdlov
Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)
Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

June 2, 1918

First published in the *Pravda* No. 54, February 23, 1942

COMRADES WORKERS, ONWARD TO THE LAST DECISIVE FIGHT!

The Soviet Republic is surrounded by enemies But it will defeat its enemies, both external and internal A rising spirit is already perceptible among the working class masses which will ensure victory We already see how frequent the sparks and flashes of the revolutionary conflagration in Western Europe have become, inspiring us with the assurance that the triumph of the international working class revolution is not far off

The external foe of the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment is British, French, American and Japanese imperialism This foe is attacking Russia, it is filching our territory, it has seized Archangel and (if the French newspapers are to be believed) has advanced from Vladivostok to Nikolsk Ussuriisk This foe has bought over the generals and officers of the Czechoslovak Corps * This enemy is attacking peaceable Russia with the ferocity and voracity of the Germans in February, the only difference being that the British and Japanese are out not only to seize and plunder Russian territory but also to overthrow the Soviet government so as to "restore the front," *i e* , once more to draw Russia into the imperialist (or, more simply, the robber) war between England and Germany

The British and Japanese capitalists want to restore the power of the landlords and capitalists in Russia in order to share with them the booty plundered in the war, they want to enslave the Russian workers and peasants to British and French capital, to squeeze out of them interest on the billions advanced in loans and to quench the fire of Socialist revolution which has broken out in our country and which is threatening to spread all over the world

The British and Japanese imperialist brutes are not strong enough to occupy and subjugate Russia Even neighbouring Germany is not strong

**The Czechoslovak Corps*—The reference here is to the Czechoslovak Corps in Russia consisting of former soldiers of the Austro Hungarian army who had been taken prisoner during the first World War (1914 18) The Soviet government granted the Corps permission to return home through Siberia and the Far East In May 1918 it raised a revolt all along its route against the Soviet government The revolt was engineered by foreign governments with the active support of the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries —*Ed*

enough for that, as was shown by her "experiment" in the Ukraine. The British and Japanese thought to catch us unawares. They failed. The workers of Petrograd, followed by the workers of Moscow, and Moscow by the entire Central Industrial Region, are rising; they are rising solidly, with growing persistence and courage and in ever larger numbers. That is a pledge of our victory.

In launching their attack on peaceable Russia the British and Japanese capitalist robbers are also counting on their alliance with the internal foe of the Soviet government. We well know who that internal foe is. It is the capitalists, the landlords, the kulaks and their offspring, who hate the government of the workers, and toiling peasants—the peasants who do not suck the blood of their fellow-villagers.

A wave of kulak revolts is sweeping over Russia. The kulak harbours a fierce hatred for the Soviet government and is prepared to strangle and massacre hundreds of thousands of workers. We know very well that if the kulaks were to gain the upper hand they would ruthlessly slaughter hundreds of thousands of workers, would, in alliance with the landlords and capitalists, restore penal conditions for the workers, abolish the eight-hour day and once again place the mills and factories under the yoke of the capitalists.

Such was the case in all earlier European revolutions when, as a result of the weakness of the workers, the kulaks succeeded in reverting from a republic to a monarchy, from government by the toilers to the despotism of the exploiters, the rich, the parasites. This has happened under our very eyes in Latvia, Finland, the Ukraine and Georgia. Everywhere the avaricious, bloated and bestial kulaks joined hands with the landlords and capitalists against the workers and against the poor generally. Everywhere the kulaks wreaked their vengeance on the working class with incredible ferocity. Everywhere they joined hands with the *foreign capitalists* against the workers of their own country. That is the way the Cadets, the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks have been acting: we have only to remember their exploits in "Czechoslovakia." That is the way the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, in their crass stupidity and spinelessness, acted too when they revolted in Moscow, thus assisting the Whiteguards in Yaroslavl and the Czechoslovaks and the Whites in Kazan. It was not without reason that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were praised by Kerensky and his friends, the French imperialists.

Doubt is out of the question. The kulaks are rabid foes of the Soviet government. Either the kulaks massacre vast numbers of workers, or the workers ruthlessly suppress the risings of the predatory kulak minority of the people against the government of the toilers. There can be no middle course. Peace is out of the question: kulaks even if they have quarrelled, can easily come to terms with the landlord, the tsar and the priest, but with the working class *never*.

That is why we call the fight against the kulak the *last*, decisive fight That does not mean that there may not be many more kulak re volts, or that there may not be many attacks on the Soviet government by foreign capitalism The word "last," the last struggle, implies that the last and most numerous of the *exploiting* classes has risen against us in our own country

The kulaks are the most brutal, callous and savage exploiters, who in the history of other countries have time and again restored the power of the landlords, tsars, priests and capitalists The kulaks are more numerous than the landlords and capitalists Nevertheless, the kulaks are a minority of the people

Let us take it that there are about fifteen million peasant households in Russia, taking Russia as she was before the robbers deprived her of the Ukraine and other territories Of these fifteen million, probably ten million are poor peasants who live by the sale of their labour power, or who are in bondage to the rich, or who lack surpluses of grain and have been most impoverished by the burdens of war About three million must be regarded as middle peasants, while barely two million consist of kulaks, rich peasants, grain profiteers These bloodsuckers have grown rich on the want suffered by the people in the war, they have raked in thousands and hundreds of thousands of rubles by screwing up the price of grain and other products These spiders have grown fat at the expense of the peasants who have been ruined by the war, at the expense of the hungry workers These leeches sucked the blood of the toilers and grew richer as the workers in the cities and factories starved These vampires have been gathering the landed estates into their hands, they keep on en slaving the poor peasants

Ruthless war must be waged on the kulaks! Death to them! Hatred and contempt for the parties which defend them—the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, and now the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries! The workers must crush with an iron hand the revolts of the kulaks who are forming an alliance with the foreign capitalists against the toilers of their own country

The kulaks take advantage of the ignorance, the disunity and isolation of the poor peasants They incite them against the workers Sometimes they bribe them by permitting them to "make a bit," a hundred rubles or so by profiteering in grain (at the same time robbing the poor peasants of many thousands of rubles) The kulaks try to win the support of the middle peasants, and sometimes they succeed

But there is no reason why the working class should quarrel with the middle peasant The working class cannot make peace with the kulak, but it may seek, and is seeking, an *agreement* with the middle peasant The workers' government, i e , the Bolshevik government, has *proved* that in deed, not in words

We proved it by passing the law on the "socialization of the land"

and strictly carrying it into effect. That law contains *numerous* concessions to the interests and views of the middle peasant.

We proved that (the other day) by *trebling* bread prices; for we fully realize that the earnings of the middle peasant are often disproportionate to present-day prices for manufactured goods and *must* be raised.

Every class-conscious worker will explain this to the middle peasant and will patiently, persistently and repeatedly point out to him that Socialism is infinitely more beneficial for the middle peasant than a government of tsars, landlords and capitalists.

The workers' government has never wronged and never will wrong the middle peasant. But the government of the tsars, landlords, capitalists and kulaks not only always wronged the middle peasant, but stifled, plundered and ruined him outright. And this is true of all countries without exception, Russia included.

Close alliance and complete fusion with the poor peasants; concessions to and agreement with the middle peasants; ruthless suppression of the kulaks, those bloodsuckers, vampires, plunderers of the people and profiteers, who fatten on famine—such is the program of the class-conscious worker. Such is the policy of the working class.

Written in the first half of August 1918
First published in 1925
in a special edition by the Lenin Institute

SPEECH DELIVERED ON "RED OFFICERS' DAY"

NOVEMBER 24, 1918

I greet you on behalf of the People's Commissars (Lenin said) Whenever I ponder over the tasks of our army and Red officers, I recall an incident I witnessed in the train on the Finland Railway not so long ago

I noticed that the people around me were smiling at something an old woman was saying, and I asked to have her words translated This Fin nish woman was comparing the old soldiers with the revolutionary sol diers, and she said that whereas the former protected the interests of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the latter protected the poor "Formerly, the poor man had to pay heavily for every stick of wood he took without permission," the old woman said "But when you meet a soldier in the woods nowadays he'll even give you a hand with your bundle of faggots You don't have to fear the man with the gun any more," she said

In my opinion (Lenin continued), it would be hard to imagine any higher tribute to the Red Army than this

Lenin went on to say that most of the old officers were the spoiled and depraved darling sons of capitalists, between whom and the private sol dier there was nothing in common And now, therefore, in building our new army, we must draw our officers solely from the ranks of the people Only Red Officers will enjoy prestige among the soldiers and will be able to strengthen Socialism in our army Such an army will be invincible

Izvestia No 258,
November 26, 1918

THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION AND THE RENEGADE KAUTSKY

PREFACE

Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, recently published in Vienna (Wien, 1918, Ignaz Brand, 63 pp.) is a very striking example of that complete and ignominious bankruptcy of the Second International which all honest Socialists in all countries have been talking about for a long time. The proletarian revolution is now becoming a practical issue in a number of countries, and an examination of Kautsky's renegade sophistries and complete abjuration of Marxism is therefore essential.

First of all, however, it is important to point out that the present writer has had numerous occasions, from the very beginning of the war, to refer to Kautsky's rupture with Marxism. A number of articles published in the course of 1914-16 in the *Sotsial-Demokrat* and the *Kommunist*, issued abroad, dealt with this subject. These articles were afterwards collected and published by the Petrograd Soviet under the title *Against the Stream*, by G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin (Petrograd, 1918, 550 pp.). In a pamphlet published in Geneva in 1915 and simultaneously translated into German and French I wrote about "Kautskyism" as follows:

> "Kautsky, the greatest authority of the Second International, represents the most typical and striking example of how lip service to Marxism has in reality led to its transformation into 'Struveism' or 'Brentanoism' [that is, into a liberal bourgeois doctrine, which recognizes a non-revolutionary 'class' struggle of the proletariat, most strikingly expressed by the Russian writer Struve and the German economist Brentano]. Plekhanov is a similar example. Those people castrate Marxism; they purge it, by means of obvious sophisms, of its revolutionary living soul; they recognize in Marxism *everything except* revolutionary means of struggle, except the advocacy of, and the preparation for, such struggle, and the education of the masses in this direction. Kautsky quite meaninglessly 'reconciles' the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, the defence of

the fatherland in this war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Left, such as abstaining from voting appropriations, verbal expression of opposition, etc Kautsky, who in 1909 wrote a book predicting the approach of a revolutionary period and discussing the relation between war and revolution, Kautsky, who in 1912 signed the Basle Manifesto on revolutionary utilization of the coming war, now justifies and embellishes social chauvinism in every way Like Plekhanov, he joins the bourgeoisie in ridiculing the very idea of revolution, in repudiating every step towards immediate revolutionary struggle

"The working class cannot realize its revolutionary role which is of world significance, otherwise than by waging a merciless war against this desertion of principles, this supineness, this servility to opportunism and this unexampled theoretical vulgarization of Marxism Kautskyism is not an accident but a social product of the contradictions within the Second International which combined faithfulness to Marxism in words with submission to opportunism in deeds" (*Socialism and War*, by G Zinoviev and N Lenin, Geneva, 1915, pp 13 14)

Again, in my book, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, which was written in 1916 and published in Petrograd in 1917, I examined in detail the theoretical fallacy of all Kautsky's arguments about imperialism I quoted Kautsky's definition of imperialism "Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to bring under its control or to annex increasingly big *agrarian* [Kautsky's italics] regions irrespective of what nations inhabit those regions" I showed how utterly incorrect this definition was, and how it was "adapted" to the glossing over of the most profound contradictions of imperialism, and then to reconciliation with opportunism I gave my own definition of imperialism "Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which the dominance of *monopolies and finance capital has established itself, in which the export* of capital has acquired pronounced importance, in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the great capitalist powers has been completed" I showed that Kautsky's critique of imperialism is at an even lower level than the bourgeois, philistine critique

Finally, in August and September 1917—that is, before the proletarian revolution in Russia (October 25 [November 7], 1917)—I wrote a brochure (published in Petrograd at the beginning of 1918) entitled *The State and Revolution The Marxist Doctrine of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution* In Chapter VI of this book, entitled 'The Vulgarization of Marxism by the Opportunists," I devoted special attention to Kautsky, showing that he had completely distorted Marx's doctrine trim-

ming it up to appear like opportunism, and that he had "repudiated the revolution in deeds, while accepting it in words."

In substance, the chief theoretical mistake Kautsky makes in his pamphlet on the dictatorship of the proletariat is precisely those opportunist distortions of Marx's doctrine of the state which I have exposed in detail in my pamphlet, *The State and Revolution*.

It was necessary to make these preliminary observations for they show that I had openly accused Kautsky of being a renegade *long before* the Bolsheviks assumed state power and were condemned by him on that account.

HOW KAUTSKY TRANSFORMED MARX INTO A COMMON OR GARDEN LIBERAL

The fundamental question that Kautsky touches upon in his pamphlet is the question of the root content of proletarian revolution, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a question that is of the greatest importance for all countries, especially for the advanced ones, especially for the belligerent countries, and especially at the present time. One may say without fear of exaggeration that this is the most important problem of the entire proletarian class struggle. Hence it is necessary to deal with it with particular attention.

Kautsky formulates the question as follows: "The antithesis between the two Socialist trends" (*i.e.*, the Bolsheviks and the non-Bolsheviks) is "the antithesis between two radically different methods: the democratic and the dictatorial" (p. 3).

Let us point out, in passing, that by calling the non-Bolsheviks in Russia, *i.e.*, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, Socialists, Kautsky was guided by their appellation, that is, by a word, and not by the *actual place* they occupy in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. What an excellent interpretation and application of Marxism! But of this more anon.

At present we must deal with the main point, *viz.*, with Kautsky's great discovery of the "fundamental antithesis" between the "democratic and dictatorial methods." That is the crux of the matter; that is the essence of Kautsky's pamphlet. And it is such a monstrous theoretical muddle, such a complete renunciation of Marxism, that Kautsky, it must be confessed, has far excelled Bernstein.

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a question of the relation between the proletarian state and the bourgeois state, between proletarian democracy and bourgeois democracy. One would think that this was as plain as noonday. But Kautsky, like a schoolmaster who has become as dry as dust from repeating the same old historical textbooks, persistently turns his back on the twentieth century and his face to the eight-

Very well Everyone has a sacred right to approach a question in whatever way he pleases One must only distinguish a serious and honest approach from a dishonest one Anyone who wanted to be serious in approaching this question in this way ought to have given *his own definition* of the "word " Then the question would have been put fairly and squarely But Kautsky does not do that "Literally," he writes, "the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy "

In the first place, this is not a definition If Kautsky wanted to avoid giving a definition of the concept dictatorship, why did he choose this particular approach to the question?

Secondly, it is obviously wrong A liberal naturally speaks of "democracy" in general, but a Marxist will never forget to ask "for what class?" Everyone knows, for instance (and Kautsky the "historian" knows it too), that rebellions, or even strong ferment, among the slaves in antique times at once revealed the fact that the antique state was essentially a *dictatorship of the slave owners* Did this dictatorship abolish democracy *among, and for, the slave owners*? Everybody knows that it did not

Kautsky the "Marxist" said this monstrously absurd and untrue thing because he "*forgot*" the class struggle

In order to transform Kautsky's liberal and lying assertion into a Marxian and true one, one must say dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy for the class that exercises the dictatorship over the other classes but it certainly does mean the abolition (or very material restriction, which is also a form of abolition) of democracy for the class over which, or against which, the dictatorship is exercised

But, however true this assertion may be, it does not give a definition of dictatorship

Let us examine Kautsky's next sentence

> "But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single individual unrestricted by any laws "

Like a blind puppy casually sniffing first in one direction and then in another, Kautsky accidentally stumbled upon *one* true idea (namely, that dictatorship is rule unrestricted by any laws), *nevertheless*, he *failed* to give a definition of dictatorship, and, moreover, he gave vent to an obvious historical falsehood, *viz* , that dictatorship means the rule of a single person This is even grammatically incorrect, since dictatorship may also be exercised by a handful of persons, or by an oligarchy, or by a class, etc

Kautsky then goes on to point out the difference between dictatorship and despotism, but, although what he says is obviously incorrect, we shall not dwell upon it, as it is wholly irrelevant to the question that interests us Everyone knows Kautsky's propensity to turn from the twentieth century to the eighteenth, and from the eighteenth century to classical antiquity, and I hope that the German proletariat, after it has established its dictatorship, will bear this propensity of his in mind and appoint him, say,

teacher of ancient history at some high school. To try to evade a definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat by philosophizing about despotism is either crass stupidity or very clumsy trickery.

As a result, we find that, having undertaken to discuss the dictatorship, Kautsky rattled off a great deal that is obviously untrue, but has not given a definition! Yet, without trusting to his mental faculties, he might have had recourse to his memory and extracted from his "pigeon-holes" all those instances in which Marx speaks of dictatorship. Had he done so, he would certainly have arrived either at the following definition or at one in the main coinciding with it:

Dictatorship is rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws.

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws.

And this simple truth, a truth that is as plain as noonday to every class-conscious worker (representing the masses, and not an upper stratum of petty-bourgeois scoundrels who have been bribed by the capitalists, such as are the social-imperialists of all countries), this truth, which is obvious to every representative of the exploited classes that are fighting for their emancipation, this truth, which is indisputable for every Marxist, has to be "extorted by main force" from the most learned Mr. Kautsky. How is it to be explained? Simply by that spirit of servility with which the leaders of the Second International, who have become contemptible sycophants in the service of the bourgeoisie, have become imbued.

Kautsky first committed a subterfuge by proclaiming the obvious nonsense that the word dictatorship, in its literal sense, means the dictatorship of a single person, and then, on the strength of this subterfuge!— he declared that Marx's words about the dictatorship of a class were not *meant* in the literal sense (but in one in which dictatorship does not imply revolutionary violence, but "the peaceful winning of a majority under bourgeois"—mark you—democracy).

One must, if you please, distinguish between a "condition" and a "form of governing"! A wonderfully profound distinction; it is like drawing a distinction between the stupid "condition" of a man who reasons foolishly and the "form" of his stupidity!

Kautsky *finds it necessary* to interpret dictatorship as a "condition of rulership" (this is the literal expression he uses on the very next page, p. 21), because then *revolutionary violence, and violent revolution, disappear*. The "condition of rulership" is a condition in which any majority finds itself under . . . "democracy." Thanks to such a fraudulent trick, *revolution* happily *disappears*.

But the trick is too crude and will not save Kautsky. One cannot do away with the fact that dictatorship presupposes and implies a "condition," one so disagreeable to all renegades, of *revolutionary violence* of one class against

another The absurdity of drawing a distinction between a "condition" and a "form of government" becomes patent To speak of forms of government in this connection is trebly stupid, for every schoolboy knows that monarchy and republic are two different forms of government It must be explained to Mr Kautsky that *both* these forms of government, like all transition al "forms of governing" under capitalism, are but so many varieties of the *bourgeois state*, that is, of the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*

Lastly, to speak of forms of government is not only a stupid, but also a very crude falsification of Marx, who was very clearly speaking here of this or that form or type of *state*, and not of forms of government

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruc tion of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one* which, in the words of Engels, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word"

But Kautsky finds it necessary to gloss this over and to lie—his renegade position demands it

See to what miserable evasions he resorts

First evasion 'That Marx did not have in mind a form of governing is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America a peaceful revolution was possible, *i e*, by democratic means"

The *form of government* has nothing to do with the case here, for there are monarchies which are not typical of the bourgeois state, such, for instance, as have no military, and there are republics which are quite typical, such, for instance, as have a military and a bureaucracy This is a universally known historical and political fact, and Kautsky will not succeed in falsifying it

If Kautsky had wanted to argue in a serious and honest manner he would have asked himself are there historical laws of revolution which know of no exception? And the reply would have been no, there are no such laws Such laws only apply to the typical, to what Marx once termed the "ideal,' meaning average, normal, typical capitalism

Further, was there in the 'seventies anything which made England and America exceptional *in regard to what we are now discussing*? It will be ob vious to anyone at all familiar with the requirements of science in the do main of history that this question must be put To fail to put it is tantamount to falsifying science, to engaging in sophistry And, the question having been put, there can be no doubt as to the reply the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is *violence* against the bourgeoisie, and the necessity for such violence is *particularly* created, as Marx and Engels have repeatedly explained in detail (especially in *The Civil War in France* and in the preface to it), by the existence of a *military and a bureaucracy* But it is precisely these institutions that were *n o n e x i s t e n t* in England and America in the 1870's, when Marx made his observations (they *do* exist in England and in America *now*)

Kautsky has to be dishonest literally at every step to cover up his renegacy!

And note how he inadvertently betrayed the cloven hoof; he wrote: "peacefully," *i.e.*, in a *democratic way*!!

In defining dictatorship, Kautsky tried his utmost to conceal from the reader the fundamental symptom of this concept, namely, revolutionary *violence*. But now the truth is out: it is a question of the contrast between *peaceful* and *violent revolutions*.

That is where the trouble lies. Kautsky had to resort to all these evasions, sophistries and fraudulent falsifications only in order to *dissociate* himself from *violent* revolution, and to conceal his renunciation of it, his desertion to the *liberal* labour policy, *i.e.*, to the side of the bourgeoisie. That is where the trouble lies.

Kautsky the "historian" so shamelessly falsifies history that he forgets the fundamental fact that pre-monopoly capitalism—which reached its zenith actually in the 1870's—was by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits (which were most typical in England and America) distinguished by a, relatively speaking, maximum attachment for peace and freedom. Imperialism, on the other hand, *i.e.*, monopoly capitalism, which finally matured only in the twentieth century, is, by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits, distinguished by a minimum attachment for peace and freedom, and by a maximum and universal development of militarism. To "fail to notice" this in discussing the extent to which a peaceful or violent revolution is typical or probable is to stoop to the position of a common or garden lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Second evasion: The Paris Commune was a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it was elected by *universal* suffrage (the bourgeoisie not being deprived of the franchise), *i.e.*, *"democratically."* And Kautsky says elatedly: ". . . The dictatorship of the proletariat, for him [Marx] is a condition which necessarily follows from pure democracy, if the proletariat represents the majority" (*bei überwiegendem Proletariat*, p. 21).

This argument of Kautsky's is so amusing that one truly suffers from a veritable *embarras de richesses* (an embarrassment due to the wealth of replies that can be made to it). Firstly, it is well known that the flower, the General Staff, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie had fled from Paris to Versailles. In Versailles there was the "Socialist" Louis Blanc—which, by the way, proves the falsity of Kautsky's assertion that "all trends" of Socialism took part in the Paris Commune. Is it not ridiculous to represent the division of the inhabitants of Paris into two belligerent camps, in one of which the entire militant and politically active section of the bourgeoisie was concentrated, as "pure democracy," with "universal suffrage"?

Secondly, the Paris Commune waged war against Versailles as the workers' government of *France* did against the bourgeois government. What has "pure democracy" and "universal suffrage" got to do with it, when Paris was deciding the fate of France? When Marx expressed the opinion that

the Paris Commune had committed a mistake in failing to seize the bank, which belonged to the whole of France, did he proceed from the principles and practice of "pure democracy"?

Really, Kautsky must be writing in a country where the people are forbidden by the police to laugh "in crowds," otherwise Kautsky would have been killed by ridicule

Thirdly, I would respectfully remind Mr Kautsky, who knows Marx and Engels by heart, of the following appreciation of the Paris Commune given by Engels from the point of view of—"pure democracy"

> "Have these gentlemen [the anti authoritarians] ever seen a revolution? A revolution is undoubtedly the most authoritarian thing there is, an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, all very authoritarian means, and the victorious party must perforce maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for having made too little use of this authority?" *

Here you have your "pure democracy"! How Engels would have ridiculed the vulgar petty bourgeois, the "Social Democrat" (in the French sense of the 'forties and the general European sense of 1914 18), who took it into his head to talk about "pure democracy" in a society divided into classes!

But enough It is impossible to enumerate all the absurdities Kautsky goes to the length of, since every phrase he utters is a bottomless pit of renegacy

Marx and Engels analysed the Paris Commune in a most detailed manner and showed that its merit lies in its attempt *to smash, to break up* the "ready made state machinery " Marx and Engels considered this conclusion to be so important that this was the *o n l y* amendment they introduced in 1872 in the (in part) "obsolete" program** of the *Communist Manifesto.* Marx and Engels showed that the Paris Commune had abolished the army and the bureaucracy, had abolished *parliamentarism*, had destroyed "that parasitic excrescence, the state," etc , but the sage Kautsky, donning his nightcap, repeats the fairy tale about "pure democracy," which has been told a thousand times by liberal professors

Not without reason did Rosa Luxemburg declare, on August 4, 1914, that German Social Democracy was now a *stinking corpse*

---

* *Cf* , F Engels, *Über das Autoritätsprinzip*, *Neue Zeit*, 1913 14, Vol, I, p 39 —*Ed*

** Lenin refers here to the following passage in the preface to the German edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* of 1872 " In view of the prac tical experience gained, first in the February Revolution, and then, still more,

Third evasion: "When we speak of the dictatorship as a form of government we cannot speak of the dictatorship of a class, since a class, as we have already pointed out, can only rule but not govern. . . ." It is "organizations" or "parties" that govern!

That is a muddle, a sheer muddle, Mr. "Muddle Counsellor." Dictatorship is not a "form of government"; that is ridiculous nonsense. And Marx does not speak of the form of government, but of the form or type of *state*. That is something altogether different. It is altogether wrong, also, to say that a *class* cannot govern; such an absurdity could only have been uttered by a "parliamentary cretin," who sees nothing but bourgeois parliaments and notices nothing but "ruling parties." Any European country will provide Kautsky with examples of government by a ruling *class*, for instance by the landlords in the Middle Ages, in spite of their insufficient organization.

To sum up: Kautsky has in a most unparalleled manner distorted the concept dictatorship of the proletariat, and has transformed Marx into a common or garden liberal; that is, he himself has sunk to the level of a liberal who utters banal phrases about "pure democracy," embellishing and glossing over the class content of *bourgeois* democracy, and shrinking, above all, from the use of *revolutionary violence* by the oppressed class. By so "interpreting" the concept "revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat" as to expunge the revolutionary violence of the oppressed class against its oppressors, Kautsky beat the world record in the liberal distortion of Marx. The renegade Bernstein has proved to be a mere puppy compared with the renegade Kautsky.

BOURGEOIS AND PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

The question which Kautsky has so hopelessly muddled really stands as follows.

If we are not to mock at common sense and history, it is obvious that we cannot speak of "pure democracy" so long as different *classes* exist; we can only speak of *class* democracy. (Be it said in parenthesis that "pure democracy" is not only an *ignorant* phrase, revealing a lack of understanding both of the class struggle and of the nature of the state, but also a thrice-hollow phrase, since in Communist society democracy will gradually change and become a habit, and finally *wither away*, but will never be "pure" democracy.)

"Pure democracy" is the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to

---

in the Paris Commune, where the proletariat for the first time held political power for two whole months, this program has in some details become antiquated. One thing especially was proved by the Commune, *viz*., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes.'" (*Cf*., Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 190.) — *Ed*.

fool the workers History knows of bourgeois democracy which takes the place of feudalism, and of proletarian democracy which takes the place of bourgeois democracy.

When Kautsky devotes dozens of pages to "proving" that bourgeois democracy is progressive compared with mediaevalism, and that the proletariat must not fail to utilize it in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, that in fact is just liberal twaddle intended to fool the workers This is a truism, not only for educated Germany, but also for uneducated Russia Kautsky is simply throwing "learned" dust in the eyes of the workers when, with a serious mien, he talks about Weitling and the Jesuits of Paraguay and many other things, but *avoids* telling about the *bourgeois* essence of contemporary, *i e*, *capitalist democracy*

Kautsky takes from Marxism what is acceptable to the liberals, to the bourgeoisie (the criticism of the Middle Ages, and the progressive historical role of capitalism in general and of capitalist democracy in particular), and discards, ignores, glosses over all that in Marxism which is *unacceptable* to the bourgeoisie (the revolutionary violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for the latter's destruction) That is why Kautsky, by virtue of his objective position and irrespective of what his subjective convictions may be, inevitably becomes a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with mediaevalism, nevertheless remains, and under capitalism cannot but remain, restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor. It is this simple truth, which forms an essential part of Marx's teachings, that Kautsky the "Marxist" has failed to understand On this fundamental question Kautsky offers "delights" for the bourgeoisie, instead of a scientific criticism of those conditions which make all bourgeois democracy only a democracy for the rich

Let us first recall to the mind of the most learned Mr. Kautsky the theoretical propositions of Marx and Engels which that "erudite" man has so disgracefully "forgotten" (in order to please the bourgeoisie), and then explain the question as popularly as possible

Not only the ancient and feudal, but also the "modern representative state is a tool for the exploitation of wage labour by capital." (Engels, in his work on the state *) "As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state, so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist " (Engels, in his letter to Bebel, March 28, 1875) "In reality the state is noth-

*Cf F Engels *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Charles H Kerr Ed , Chicago, 1902, pp 208 09 —*Ed*

ing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy." (Engels, preface to Marx's *The Civil War in France.*) Universal suffrage is "an index of the maturity of the working class. *It cannot and never will be anything more in the modern state.*" (Engels, in his work on the state.) Mr. Kautsky tediously chews the cud over the first part of this proposition, which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. But as to the second part, which we have italicized and which is not acceptable to the bourgeoisie, the renegade Kautsky conveniently omits it!

> "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time. . . . Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and repress (*ver-und zertreten*) the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business." (Marx, *The Civil War in France.*)

Every one of these propositions, which are well known to the most learned Mr. Kautsky, is a slap in the face to him and lays bare his renegacy. Nowhere in his pamphlet does Kautsky reveal the slightest understanding of these truths. His whole pamphlet is a sheer mockery of Marxism!

Take the fundamental laws of modern states, take their administration, take the right of assembly, freedom of the press, or "equality of all citizens before the law," and you will see at every step evidence of the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy with which every honest and class-conscious worker is familiar. There is not a single state, however democratic, which does not contain loopholes or reservations in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of dispatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law, and so forth, in case of a "violation of public order," *i.e.*, in case the exploited class "violates" its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner. Kautsky shamelessly embellishes bourgeois democracy and omits to mention, for instance, how the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie of America or Switzerland deals with workers on strike.

Oh, the wise and learned Kautsky remains silent about these things! That pundit and statesman does not realize that to remain silent on this matter is despicable. He prefers to tell the workers nursery tales to the effect that democracy means "protecting the minority." It is incredible, but it is a fact. In the summer of this year of our Lord 1918, in the fifth year of the world imperialist slaughter and the strangulation of internationalist minorities (*i.e.*, those who have not despicably betrayed Socialism, like the Renaudels and Longuets, the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Hendersons and Webbs) in all "democracies of the world," the learned Mr. Kautsky sweetly sings the praises of "protection of the minority." Those who are interested may read this on page 15 of Kautsky's pamphlet. And on page 16

this learned individual tells you about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century!

Oh, wonderful erudition! Oh, refined servility to the bourgeoisie! Oh, civilized belly crawling and boot-licking before the capitalists! If I were Krupp or Scheidemann, or Clemenceau or Renaudel, I would pay Mr Kautsky millions, reward him with Judas kisses, praise him before the workers and urge "socialist unity" with "honourable" men like him To write pamphlets against the dictatorship of the proletariat, to talk about the Whigs and Tories in England in the eighteenth century, to assert that democracy means "protecting the minority," and remain silent about *pogroms* against internationalists in the "democratic" republic of America —is this not rendering lackey service to the bourgeoisie?

The learned Mr Kautsky has "forgotten"—accidentally, no doubt—a "bagatelle", namely, that the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy extends the protection of the minority only to another *bourgeois* party, while on all *serious, profound and fundamental* issues the proletariat gets martial law or pogroms, instead of the "protection of the minority." *The more highly developed a democracy is, the more imminent are pogroms or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which is dangerous to the bourgeoisie* The learned Mr Kautsky could have studied this "law" of bourgeois democracy in connection with the Dreyfus* affair in republican France, with the lynching of Negroes and internationalists in the democratic republic of America, with the case of Ireland and Ulster in democratic Britain, with the persecution of the Bolsheviks and the organization of pogroms against them in April 1917 in the democratic republic of Russia I have purposely chosen examples not only from the time of the war but also from pre war time But mealy mouthed Mr Kautsky is pleased to shut his eyes to these facts of the twentieth century, and instead to tell the workers wonderfully new, remarkably interesting, unusually edifying and incredibly important things about the Whigs and Tories of the eighteenth century!

Take the bourgeois parliament Can it be that learned Kautsky has never heard that the *more* highly democracy is developed, the *more* the bourgeois parliaments are under the sway of the stock exchange and the bankers? This, of course, does not mean that we must not make use of bourgeois parliaments (the Bolsheviks made better use of them than any other party in the world, for in 1912 14 we captured the entire workers' *curia* in the Fourth Duma) But it does mean that only a liberal can forget the *histor-*

**Dreyfus*—a General Staff officer of the French army, a Jew by nationality, who was sentenced for life by a military tribunal in 1894 on a trumped up charge of treason The Socialists and the more progressive bourgeois democratic elements in France came out in defence of Dreyfus The struggle that ensued around the demand that the case be reconsidered was in actual fact a clash of arms between the republicans and the monarchists Under pressure of public opinion, as a result of a long and stubborn struggle, Dreyfus was pardoned and vindicated of the charge —*Ed*

ical limitations and conventional character of bourgeois parliamentarism as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed masses at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the "democracy" of the capitalists and the thousand and one real limitations and complications which turn the proletarians into *wage-slaves*. It is precisely this contradiction that is opening the eyes of the masses to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction which the agitators and propagandists of Socialism are constantly showing up to the masses, *in order to prepare them* for revolution. And now that the era of revolution has begun, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of moribund bourgeois democracy!

Proletarian democracy, of which Soviet government is one of the forms, has brought a development and expansion of democracy hitherto unprecedented in the world, precisely for the vast majority of the population, for the exploited and working people. To write a whole pamphlet about democracy, as Kautsky did, in which two pages are devoted to dictatorship and scores to "pure democracy," and *fail to notice* this fact, means complete distortion of the subject in a liberal way.

Take foreign politics. In no bourgeois state, not even in the most democratic, are they conducted openly. In all democratic countries—France, Switzerland, America, or England—the masses are deceived on an incomparably wider scale and in a more subtle manner than in other countries. The Soviet government has torn the veil of mystery from foreign politics in a revolutionary way. Kautsky has not noticed this, he remains silent about it, although in the present era of predatory wars and secret treaties for the "division of spheres of influence" (*i.e.*, for the partition of the world among the capitalist bandits) the subject is one of cardinal importance for on it depends the question of peace, the life and death of tens of millions of people.

Take the organization of the state. Kautsky clutches at all manner of "trifles," down to the argument that under the Soviet constitution elections are "indirect," but he misses the essence of the matter. He fails to see the *class* nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state: under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by a thousand and one tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more "pure" democracy is developed—*debar* the masses from a share in the work of administration, from freedom of the press, the right of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the *first* in the world (or strictly speaking the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to *enlist* the masses, the *exploited* masses, in the work of administration. For the toiling masses, participation in bourgeois parliaments (which *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy; they are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) is *hindered* by a thousand and one obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realize perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions

alien to them, *instruments for the oppression* of the proletarians by the bourgeois, institutions of a hostile class, of an exploiting minority

The Soviets are the direct organization of the toiling and exploited masses themselves, which *helps* them to organize and administer the state themselves in every possible way And in this it is the vanguard of the toiling and exploited, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage, in that it is best organized by the large enterprises it is much easier for it to elect and watch elections The Soviet organization automatically *helps* to unite all the toilers and exploited round their vanguard, the proletariat The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc (which are the more varied, the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet forms of organization Freedom of the press ceases to be hypocrisy, because the printing plants and stocks of paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie The same thing applies to the best buildings, the palaces, the mansions and manor houses The Soviet government took thousands and thousands of these best buildings from the exploiters at one stroke, and in this way made the right of assembly—without which democracy is a fraud—a million times more "democratic" Indirect elections to non local Soviets make it e[illegible] make the *entire* apparatus less cc[illegible] workers and peasants at a time wh[illegible] be able very quickly to recall one's local deputy or to delegate him to the general Congress of Soviets

Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy, Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic

Only one who deliberately serves the bourgeoisie, or one who is politically as dead as a doornail, who does not see real life from behind the dusty pages of bourgeois books, who is thoroughly imbued with bourgeois democratic prejudices, and thereby objectively becomes a lackey of the bourgeoisie, could have failed to see this

Only one who is incapable of *presenting the question* from the point of view of the *oppressed* classes could have failed to see this

Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the *average rank and file* worker, the average rank and file *village labourer*, or village semi proletarian generally (i e the representative of the oppressed masses, the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such *liberty* of holding meetings in the best buildings, such *liberty* to use the largest printing plants and biggest stocks of paper to express his ideas and to defend his interests such *liberty* to promote men and women of his own class to administer and to "run" the state, as in Soviet Russia?

It is ridiculous to think that Mr Kautsky could find in any country even one well informed worker or agricultural labourer out of a thousand

who would have any doubts as to the reply to this question. Instinctively, from hearing fragments of admissions of the truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the whole world sympathize with the Soviet Republic precisely because they regard it as a *proletarian* democracy, *a democracy for the poor*, and not a democracy for the rich, as every bourgeois democracy, even the best, actually is.

We are governed (and our state is "run") by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of parliament, by bourgeois judges—such is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth, which tens and hundreds of millions of the exploited classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their living experience, feel and realize every day.

But in Russia the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets control the bureaucrats, and *their* Soviets elect the judges. This fact alone is enough to cause all the oppressed classes to recognize the Soviet government, that is, the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as being a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Kautsky does not understand this truth, which is so obvious and intelligible to every worker, because he has "forgotten," "unlearned" to put the question, democracy *for what class*? He argues from the point of view of "pure" (*i.e.*, non-class? or above-class?) democracy. He argues like Shylock: my "pound of flesh," and nothing else. Equality for all citizens—otherwise there is no democracy.

We must ask the learned "Marxist" and "Socialist" Kautsky:

Can there be equality between the exploited and the exploiters?

It is monstrous, it is incredible that one should have to put such a question in discussing a book written by the ideological leader of the Second International. But "having put your hand to the plough, don't look back," and having undertaken to write about Kautsky, I must explain to the learned man why there can be no equality between the exploiters and the exploited.

CAN THERE BE EQUALITY BETWEEN THE EXPLOITED AND THE EXPLOITERS?

Kautsky argues as follows:

1) "The exploiters have always constituted only a small minority of the population" (p. 14 of Kautsky's pamphlet).

That is certainly true. Taking this as the starting point, what should be the argument? One may argue in a Marxist, a Socialist way; in which case one would take as the basis the relation between the exploited and the exploiters. Or one may argue in a liberal, a bourgeois-democratic way; and

in that case one would take as the basis the relation between the majority and the minority.

If we argue in a Marxist way, we must say: the exploiters inevitably transform the state (we are speaking of democracy, *i.e.*, one of the forms of the state) into an instrument for the rule of their class, of the exploiters, over the exploited. Hence, so long as there are exploiters who rule the majority, the exploited, the democratic state must inevitably be a democracy for the exploiters. A state of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a state; it must be a democracy for the exploited, and a means of *suppressing the exploiters*; and the suppression of a class means inequality for that class, its exclusion from "democracy."

If we argue in a liberal way, we must say: the majority decides, the minority submits. Those who do not submit are punished. That is all. Nothing need be said about the class character of the state in general, or of "pure democracy" in particular, because it is irrelevant; for a majority is a majority and a minority is a minority. A pound of flesh is a pound of flesh, and that is all there is to it.

And this is exactly the way Kautsky argues.

2) "Why should the rule of the proletariat assume, and necessarily assume, a form which is incompatible with democracy?" (P. 21.) Then follows a very lengthy and very verbose explanation, backed by a quotation from Marx and the election figures of the Paris Commune, to the effect that the proletariat is in the majority. The conclusion is: "A regime which is so strongly rooted in the masses has not the slightest reason for encroaching upon democracy. It cannot always dispense with violence in cases when violence is employed to suppress democracy. Violence can only be met with violence. But a regime which knows that it has the support of the masses will employ violence only in order to *protect* democracy and not to *destroy* it. It would be simply suicidal if it attempted to destroy its most reliable basis—universal suffrage, that deep source of mighty moral authority" (p. 22).

You see, the relation between the exploited and the exploiters has entirely vanished in Kautsky's argument. All that remains is majority in general, minority in general, democracy in general, the "pure democracy" with which we are already familiar.

And all this, mark you, is said *apropos of the Paris Commune!* We will quote Marx and Engels, by way of illustration, to show how they discuss the subject of dictatorship, *apropos of the Paris Commune:*

> *Marx:* ". . . When the workers substitute their revolutionary dictatorship for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie . . . in order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie . . . the workers invest the state with a revolutionary and transitional form. . . ."
>
> *Engels:* ". . . The victorious party [in a revolution] must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reaction-

aries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for having made too little use of this authority? . . ."

Engels: "As, therefore, the state is only a transitional institution which is used in the struggle, in the revolution, in order to hold down one's adversaries by force, it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state; so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist. . . ."

Kautsky is as far removed from Marx and Engels as heaven is from earth, as a liberal from a proletarian revolutionary. The pure democracy and simple "democracy" that Kautsky talks about is merely a paraphrase of the "free people's state," *i.e.*, *pure nonsense*. Kautsky, with the learned air of a most learned armchair fool, or with the innocent air of a ten-year-old schoolgirl, asks: why do we need a dictatorship when we have a majority? And Marx and Engels explain:

In order to break down the resistance of the bourgeoisie;

In order to inspire the reactionaries with terror;

In order to maintain the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie;

In order that the proletariat may forcibly hold down its adversaries.

But Kautsky does not understand these explanations. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, blind to its bourgeois character, he "consistently" urges that the majority, since it is the majority, need not "break down the resistance" of the minority, nor "forcibly hold it down"—it is sufficient to suppress *cases* of infringement of democracy. Infatuated with the "purity" of democracy, Kautsky *inadvertently* commits the same little error that all bourgeois democrats always commit, namely, he takes formal equality (which is nothing but a fraud and hypocrisy under capitalism) for actual equality. Quite a bagatelle!

The exploiter and the exploited cannot be equal.

This truth, however unpleasant it may be to Kautsky, is nevertheless an essential part of Socialism.

Another truth: there can be no real, actual equality until all possibility of the exploitation of one class by another has been destroyed.

The exploiters can be defeated at one stroke in the event of a successful uprising at the centre, or of a mutiny in the army. But except in very rare and special cases, the exploiters cannot be destroyed at one stroke. It is impossible to expropriate all the landlords and capitalists of a country of any size at one stroke. Furthermore, expropriation alone, as a legal or political act, does not settle the matter by a long way, because

it is necessary *to depose* the landlords and capitalists in actual fact, *to replace* their management of the factories and estates by workers' management in actual fact There can be no equality between the exploiters—who for many generations have enjoyed education and the advantages and habits of wealth—and the exploited, the majority of whom even in the most advanced and most democratic bourgeois republics are downtrodden, backward, ignorant, intimidated and disunited For a long time after the revolution the exploiters inevitably continue to enjoy a number of great practical advantages they still have money (since it is impossible to abolish money all at once), some movable property—often fairly considerable, they still have various connections, habits of organization and management, knowledge of all the "secrets" (customs, methods, means and possibilities) of management, superior education, close connections with the higher technical personnel (who live and think like the bourgeoisie), incomparably greater experience in the art of war (this is very important), and so on, and so forth

If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is the typical case, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they *still* remain *stronger* than the exploited, for the international connections of the exploiters are enormous The fact that a section of the exploited, or the least developed section of the middle peasant, artisan and similar masses, may, and indeed do, follow the exploiters has been proved hitherto by *all* revolutions, including the Commune (for there were also proletarians among the Versailles troops, which the most learned Kautsky seems to have 'forgotten')

In these circumstances, to assume that in a revolution which is at all profound and serious the issue is decided simply by the relation between the majority and the minority is the acme of stupidity, the stupid prejudice of a common or garden liberal, an attempt to *deceive the masses* by concealing from them a well established historical truth This historical truth is that in every profound revolution, a *prolonged, stubborn and desperate* resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years enjoy important practical advantages over the exploited, is the *rule* Never—except in the sentimental phantasies of the sentimental simpleton Kautsky—will the exploiters submit to the decision of the exploited majority without making use of their advantages in a last desperate battle, or series of battles

The transition from capitalism to Communism represents an entire historical epoch Until this epoch has terminated, the exploiters will inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this *hope* will be converted into *attempts* at restoration And after their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters—who had not expected their overthrow, never believed it possible, never conceded the thought of it—will throw themselves with tenfold energy, with furious passion and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of their lost "paradise," on behalf of

heir families who had been leading such a sweet and easy life and whom iow the "common herd" is condemning to ruin and destitution (or to 'common" work. . . .). In the train of the capitalist exploiters will be found .he broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie, with regard to whom the his:orical experience of every country for decades testifies that they vacillate ind hesitate, one day marching behind the proletariat and the next day taking fright at the difficulties of the revolution; that they become panic-stricken at the first defeat or semi-defeat of the workers, grow nervous, run about aimlessly, snivel, and rush from one camp to the other—just like our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries!

And in these circumstances, in an epoch of desperate acute war, when history has placed on the order of the day whether age-long privileges are to be or not to be—at such a time to talk about majority and minority, about pure democracy, about dictatorship being unnecessary and about equality between the exploiter and the exploited! What infinite stupidity and colossal philistinism are needed for this!

But during the decades of comparatively "peaceful" capitalism, between 1871 and 1914, whole Augean stables of philistinism, imbecility, and renegacy accumulated in the Socialist parties which were adapting themselves to opportunism.

* * *

The reader will probably have noticed that Kautsky, in the passage from his pamphlet quoted above, speaks of an attempt to encroach upon universal suffrage (extolling it, by the way, as a deep source of mighty moral authority, whereas Engels, *apropos* of the same Paris Commune and the same question of dictatorship, spoke of the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie—a very characteristic difference between the philistine's and the revolutionary's views on "authority". . . .).

It should be observed that the question of depriving the exploiters of the franchise is *purely a Russian* question, and not a question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in general. Had Kautsky, casting aside hypocrisy, entitled his pamphlet *Against the Bolsheviks*, the title would have corresponded to the contents of the pamphlet, and Kautsky would have been justified in speaking directly about the franchise. But Kautsky wanted to write primarily as a "theoretician." He called his pamphlet the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat—in general.* He speaks about the Soviets and about Russia specially only in the second part of the pamphlet, beginning with the fifth paragraph. The subject dealt with in the first part (from which I took the quotation), is *democracy* and *dictatorship in general.* In speaking about the franchise, Kautsky betrayed *himself* as an opponent of the Bolsheviks *who does not care a brass farthing for theory.* For theory, *i.e.*, the discussion of the general (and not the nationally specific) class basis of democracy and dictatorship, ought to deal not with a special question,

such as the franchise, but with the general question of whether democracy can be *preserved for the rich and the exploiters* in the historical period of the overthrow of the exploiters and the substitution of the state of the exploited for the exploiters' state

That is the only way a theoretician can present the question

We know the example of the Paris Commune, we know all that was said by the founders of Marxism in connection with it and in reference to it On the basis of this material I examined, for example, the question of democracy and dictatorship in my book, *The State and Revolution*, written before the October Revolution *I did not say anything at all* about restricting the franchise And it must be said now that the question of restricting the franchise is a nationally specific and not a general question of the dictatorship One must study the question of restricting the franchise in the light of the *specific conditions* of the Russian revolution and the *specific path* of its development This will be done later on in this pamphlet It would be a mistake, however, to guarantee in advance that the impending proletarian revolutions in Europe will all, or the majority of them, be necessarily accompanied by restriction of the franchise for the bourgeoisie It may be so After our experience of the war and of the Russian revolution we can say that it probably will be so, but it is not *absolutely necessary* for the exercise of the dictatorship, it is not an *essential* earmark of the logical concept "dictatorship," it does not enter as an *essential* condition in the historical and class concept "dictatorship "

The necessary earmark, the essential condition of dictatorship, is the *forcible* suppression of the exploiters as a *class*, and, consequently, the *infringement* of "pure democracy," *i e* , of equality and freedom *for* that *class*

Only in this way can the question be put theoretically And by failing to put the question thus, Kautsky showed that he opposes the Bolsheviks not as a theoretician, but as a sycophant of the opportunists and the bourgeoisie

In which countries, and given what special national features of this or that capitalism, democracy for the exploiters will be restricted, infringed upon (wholly or in part) is a question of the special national features of this or that capitalism of this or that revolution The theoretical question is an entirely different one, *viz* , is the dictatorship of the proletariat possible *without infringing democracy* in relation to the *exploiting* class?

It is precisely this question, the *only* theoretically important and essential one, that Kautsky has evaded He has quoted all sorts of passages from Marx and Engels, *except those* which bear on this question, and which I quoted above

Kautsky talks about everything, about everything that is acceptable to liberals and bourgeois democrats and does not go beyond their circle of ideas, but he does not talk about the main thing, namely, the fact that the proletariat cannot achieve victory *without breaking the resistance* of

the bourgeoisie, *without forcibly suppressing its enemies*, and that, where there is "forcible suppression," where there is no "freedom," *there is, of course, no democracy*.

This Kautsky has not understood.

* * *

We shall now examine the experience of the Russian revolution and that divergence between the Soviets of deputies and the Constituent Assembly which led to the dissolution of the latter and to the withdrawal of the franchise from the bourgeoisie.

THE SOVIETS DARE NOT BECOME STATE ORGANIZATIONS

The Soviets are the Russian form of the proletarian dictatorship. If a Marxist theoretician, writing a work on the dictatorship of the proletariat, had really studied the subject (and not merely repeated the petty-bourgeois lamentations against dictatorship, as Kautsky does, repeating the Menshevik melodies) he would first of all have given a general definition of dictatorship, and would then have examined its peculiar national form, the Soviets; he would have given his critique of them as one of the forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It goes without saying that nothing serious could be expected from Kautsky after his liberal-like "interpretation" of Marx's theory of the dictatorship; but the manner in which he approached the question of what the Soviets are and the way he dealt with this question is highly characteristic.

The Soviets, he says, recalling their rise in 1905, created "the most all-embracing [*umfassendste*] form of proletarian organization, for it embraced all the wage workers" (p. 31). In 1905 they were only local bodies; in 1917 they became a national organization.

> "The Soviet organization," Kautsky continues, "has already a great and glorious history behind it, and it has a still more mighty future before it, and not in Russia alone. It appears that everywhere the old methods of the economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate [*versagen*; this German expression is somewhat stronger than "inadequate" and somewhat weaker than "impotent"] against the gigantic economic and political forces which finance capital has at its disposal. These old methods cannot be discarded: they are still indispensable for normal times; but from time to time tasks arise which they cannot cope with, tasks that can be successful only as a result of a combination of all the political and economic instruments of force of the working class" (p. 32).

Then follows a disquisition on the mass strike and on the "trade union bureaucracy"—which is no less necessary than the trade unions—being

"useless for the purpose of directing the mighty class battles that are more and more becoming the sign of the times ."

> "Thus," Kautsky concludes, "the Soviet organization is one of the most important phenomena of our time It promises to acquire decisive importance in the great decisive battles between capital and labour towards which we are marching
>
> "But are we justified in demanding more of the Soviets? The Bolsheviks, after the Revolution of November [new style, or October, according to our style] 1917, secured in conjunction with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries a majority in the Russian Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and, after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, they set out to transform the Soviets from a *militant organization* of one *class*, as they had been till then, into a *state organization* They destroyed the democracy which the Russian people had won in the March [new style, or February, our style] Revolution In line with this, the Bolsheviks have ceased to call themselves *Social Democrats* They call themselves *Communists*" (p 33, Kautsky's italics)

Those who are familiar with Russian Menshevik literature will at once see how slavishly Kautsky copies Martov, Axelrod, Stein and Co Yes, "slavishly," because Kautsky absurdly distorts the facts in order to pander to Menshevik prejudices Kautsky did not take the trouble, for instance, to ask his informants (Stein of Berlin, or Axelrod of Stockholm) *when* the questions of changing the name of the Bolsheviks to Communists and of the importance of the Soviets as state organizations were first raised Had Kautsky made this simple inquiry he would not have penned these laughter provoking lines, for both these questions were raised by the Bolsheviks *in April 1917*, for example, in my "Theses" of April 4, 1917, *i e*, *long before* the Revolution of October 1917 (and, of course, long before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918)

But the passage from Kautsky's argument which I have just quoted in full represents the *crux* of the whole question of the Soviets The crux is should the Soviets aspire to become state organizations (in April 1917 the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" and at the Bolshevik Party Conference held in the same month they declared that they were not satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary republic but demanded a workers' and peasants' republic of the Paris Commune type, or Soviet type), *or* should the Soviets not strive for this, refrain from taking political power into their hands, refrain from becoming state organizations and remain the "militant organizations" of one "class" (as Martov expressed it, plausibly concealing under this innocent wish the fact that under Menshevik leadership the Soviets were *an instrument for the subjection of the workers to the bourgeoisie*)?

Kautsky slavishly repeats Martov's words, picks out *fragments* of the theoretical controversy between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, and uncritically and senselessly transplants them to the general theoretical and general European field. The result is such a hodge-podge as to provoke Homeric laughter in every class-conscious Russian worker who hears of these arguments of Kautsky's.

And when we explain what the question at issue is, every worker in Europe (barring a handful of inveterate social-imperialists) will greet Kautsky with a similar roar of laughter.

Kautsky has rendered Martov a backhanded service by reducing his mistake to an obvious absurdity. Let us see what Kautsky's argument amounts to.

The Soviets embrace all wage workers. The old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate against finance capital. The Soviets have a great role to play in the future, and not only in Russia. They will play a decisive role in great decisive battles between capital and labour in Europe. That is what Kautsky says.

Excellent. But will not the "decisive battles between capital and labour" decide which of the two classes will gain possession of the power of state?

Nothing of the kind! God forbid!

Organizations which embrace all the wage workers *must not become state organizations* in the "decisive" battles.

But what is the state?

The state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another.

Thus, the oppressed class, the vanguard of all the toilers and exploited in modern society, must strive towards the "decisive battles between capital and labour," but *must not touch* the machine by means of which capital suppresses labour!—It *must not break up* that machine!—*It must not make use* of its all-embracing organization *for the purpose of suppressing the exploiters*!

Excellent, Mr. Kautsky, magnificent! "We" recognize the class struggle—in the same way as all liberals recognize it, *i.e.*, without the overthrow of the bourgeoisie....

This is where Kautsky's complete rupture both with Marxism and with Socialism becomes obvious. Practically, it is desertion to the camp of the bourgeoisie, which is prepared to concede everything except the transformation of the organizations of the class which it oppresses into state organizations. Kautsky can no longer save his position of trying to reconcile everything and of brushing aside all profound contradictions with mere phrases.

Kautsky either rejects the transmission of political power to the working class altogether, or he concedes that the working class may take over the old, bourgeois state machine; but he will not concede that it must break

it up, smash it, and replace it by a new, proletarian machine Whichever way Kautsky's arguments are "interpreted," or "explained," his rupture with Marxism and his desertion to the bourgeoisie are obvious

Already in *The Communist Manifesto*, describing what sort of state the victorious working class needs, Marx wrote "a state, that is, the proletariat organized as the ruling class " Now we have a man who claims to be still a Marxist coming forward and declaring that the proletariat, organized to a man and waging the "decisive battle" against capital, *must not* transform its class organization into a state organization! Here Kautsky has betrayed that "superstitious belief in the state" which in Germany, as Engels wrote in 1891, "has been carried over into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers " Workers, fight!—our philistine "agrees" to this (as every bourgeois "agrees," since the workers are fighting all the same, and the only thing to do is to devise means of blunting the edge of their sword)—fight, but *don't dare win!* Don't destroy the state machine of the bourgeoisie, don't put the proletarian "state organization" in the place of the bourgeois "state organization"!

Whoever sincerely shares the Marxian view that the state is nothing but a machine for the suppression of one class by another, and who has at all reflected upon this truth, could never have reached the absurd conclusion that the proletarian organizations capable of defeating finance capital must not transform themselves into state organizations It was this point that betrayed the petty bourgeois who believes that "after all is said and done" the state is something outside of class, or above class Indeed, why should the proletariat, *"one class,"* be permitted to wage determined war on *capital*, which rules not only over the proletariat, but over the whole people, over the whole petty bourgeoisie, over the whole peasantry, yet this proletariat, this *"one class,"* is not to be permitted to transform its organization into a state organization? Because the petty bourgeois is *afraid* of the class struggle, and does not carry it to its logical conclusion, *to its main object*

Kautsky has got himself completely mixed up and has given himself away entirely Mark you, he himself admits that Europe is heading for decisive battles between capital and labour, and that the old methods of economic and political struggle of the proletariat are inadequate But these old methods were precisely the utilization of *bourgeois* democracy It therefore follows?

But Kautsky was afraid to think what follows

Hence, only a reactionary, only an enemy of the working class, only a henchman of the bourgeoisie, can now turn his face to the obsolete past, paint the charms of bourgeois democracy and babble about pure democracy Bourgeois democracy *was* progressive compared with mediaevalism, and it was necessary to utilize it. But now it is *inadequate* for the working class Now we must look, not backward, but forward—to substituting *proletarian* democracy for bourgeois democracy And although the pre-

paratory work for the proletarian revolution, the formation and training of the proletarian army were possible (and necessary) *within the framework* of the bourgeois-democratic state, now that we have reached the stage of "decisive battles," to confine the proletariat to this framework means betraying the cause of the proletariat, means being a renegade.

Kautsky has made himself particularly ridiculous by repeating Martov's argument *without noticing* that in Martov's case this argument was based on *another* argument which he, Kautsky, does not use! Martov said (and Kautsky repeats after him) that Russia is not yet ripe for Socialism; from which it logically follows that it is too early to transform the Soviets from organs of struggle into state organizations (read: it is timely to transform the Soviets, with the assistance of the Menshevik leaders, into instruments for *subjecting* the workers to the imperialist bourgeoisie). Kautsky, however, *cannot* say outright that Europe is not ripe for Socialism. In 1909, when he was not yet a renegade, he wrote that there was now no reason to fear a *premature* revolution, that whoever renounced revolution for fear of defeat would be a traitor. Kautsky does not dare renounce this *outright*. And so we get the following absurdity, which utterly betrays the stupidity and cowardice of the petty bourgeois: on the one hand, Europe is ripe for Socialism and is heading towards decisive battles between capital and labour; but, on the other hand, the *fighting organization* (*i.e.*, the organization which is formed, grows and becomes strong in battle), the organization of the proletariat, the vanguard and organizer, the leader of the oppressed, *must not* be transformed into a state organization!

* * *

From the point of view of practical politics the idea that the Soviets are necessary as a fighting organization but must not be transformed into state organizations is even infinitely more absurd than from the point of view of theory. Even in peace time, when there is no revolutionary situation, the mass struggle of the workers against the capitalists—for instance, a mass strike—gives rise to great bitterness on both sides, to fierce passions in the struggle, the bourgeoisie constantly insisting that it remains and will remain "master in its own house," etc. But in time of revolution, when political life reaches boiling point, an organization like the Soviets, which embraces *all* the workers in *all* branches of industry, *all* the soldiers, and all the toiling and poorest sections of the rural population—such an organization, of its own accord, in the course of the struggle, by the simple "logic" of attack and defence, comes inevitably to raise the question of power *point-blank*. The attempt to take up a middle position and to "reconcile" the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is sheer stupidity and is doomed to miserable failure. That is what happened in Russia to the preachings of Martov and other Mensheviks, and that will inevitably happen in Germany and other countries if the Soviets succeed in developing on any wide scale,

manage to unite and become consolidated To say to the Soviets fight, but do not take the entire political power into your hands, do not become state organizations—is tantamount to preaching class collaboration and 'social peace' between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie It is ridiculous even to think that such a position in the midst of fierce struggle could lead to anything but ignominious failure But it is Kautsky's everlasting fate to sit between two stools He pretends that he does not agree with the opportunists on anything in theory, but actually he agrees with them on everything essential (i e, on everything that pertains to revolution), *in practice*

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE SOVIET REPUBLIC

The question of the Constituent Assembly and its dispersal by the Bolsheviks is the crux of Kautsky s entire pamphlet He constantly reverts to it, and the whole of this literary production of the ideological leader of the Second International teems with innuendoes to the effect that the Bolsheviks have "destroyed democracy" (see one of the quotations from Kautsky above) The question is really an interesting and important one, because the relation between bourgeois democracy and proletarian democracy here confronts the revolution in a *practical* form Let us see how our "Marxist theoretician" has dealt with the question

He quotes the "Theses on the Constituent Assembly," which were written by me and published in the *Pravda* of December 26, 1917 One would think that no better evidence of Kautsky's serious approach to the subject, quoting as he does the documents, could be desired But observe *h o w* he quotes He does not say that there were nineteen of these theses, he does not say that they dealt with the relation between the ordinary bourgeois republic, with a Constituent Assembly, and a Soviet republic, as well as with the *history* of the divergence in our revolution between the Constituent Assembly and the dictatorship of the proletariat Kautsky ignores all that, and simply tells the reader that "two of them [of the theses] are particularly important', one stating that a split occurred among the Socialist Revolutionaries after the elections to the Constituent Assembly, but before it was convened (Kautsky does not mention that this was the fifth thesis), and the other, that the republic of Soviets is in general a higher democratic form than the Constituent Assembly (Kautsky does not mention that this was the third thesis)

And only from this third thesis does Kautsky quote a part in full, namely, the following passage

"The republic of Soviets is not only the form of a higher type of democratic institution (as compared with the *usual* bourgeois republic crowned by a Constituent Assembly), but is the only form capable of secur

ing the most painless* transition to Socialism" (Kautsky omits the word "usual" and the introductory words of the thesis: "For the transition from the bourgeois to the Socialist order, for the dictatorship of the proletariat").

After quoting these words, Kautsky, with magnificent irony, exclaims:

> "It is a pity that this conclusion was arrived at only after the Bolsheviks found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly. Before that no one had demanded it more clamorously than Lenin."

This is literally what Kautsky says on page 31 of his book!

It is positively a gem! Only a sycophant of the bourgeoisie could so misrepresent the question as to give the reader the impression that all the Bolsheviks' talk about a higher type of state was an invention which saw the light of day *after* they found themselves in the minority in the Constituent Assembly!! Such an infamous lie could only have been uttered by a scoundrel who has sold himself to the bourgeoisie, or, what is absolutely the same thing, who has placed his trust in P. Axelrod and is concealing the source of his information.

For everyone knows that on the very day of my arrival in Russia, on April 4, 1917, I publicly read my theses in which I proclaimed the superiority of the Paris Commune type of state over the bourgeois parliamentary republic. Afterwards, I *repeatedly* stated this in print, as, for instance, in a pamphlet on political parties,** which was translated into English and was published in January 1918 in the New York *Evening Post*. Moreover, the conference of the Bolshevik Party held at the end of April 1917 adopted a resolution to the effect that a proletarian and peasant republic was superior to a bourgeois parliamentary republic, that our Party would not be satisfied with the latter, and that the program of the Party should be amended accordingly.

In face of these facts, what name can be given to Kautsky's trick of assuring his German readers that I had been clamorously demanding the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and that I began to "belittle" the honour and dignity of the Constituent Assembly after the Bolsheviks found themselves in the minority in it? How can one excuse such a trick?***

*Incidentally, Kautsky, with an obvious attempt at sarcasm, repeatedly quotes the expression "most painless" transition; but as the shaft misses its mark, he a few pages further on commits a slight forgery and falsely quotes it as a "painless" transition! Of course, by such means it is easy to put any absurdity into the mouth of an opponent. The forgery also facilitates the evasion of the substance of the argument, namely, that the most painless transition to Socialism is possible only when all the poor are organized to a man (Soviets) and when the central state power (of the proletariat) helps to organize them.

** "Political Parties in Russia and the Tasks of the Proletariat," Lenin, *Collected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. XX, Book I.—*Ed*

*** Incidentally, there are many Menshevik lies of this kind in Kautsky's pamphlet! It is a lampoon written by a disgruntled Menshevik.

By pleading that Kautsky did not know the facts? If that is the case, why did he undertake to write about them? Or why did he not honestly declare that he was writing on the strength of information supplied by the Mensheviks Stein and P. Axelrod and Co.? By pretending to be objective, Kautsky wants to conceal his role as the servant of the Mensheviks, who are disgruntled because they have been defeated.

But these are only the blossoms, the fruit is yet to come.

Let us assume that Kautsky would not or could not (??) obtain from his informants a translation of the Bolshevik resolutions and declarations on the question of whether they would be satisfied with a bourgeois parliamentary democratic republic or not. Let us assume this, although it is incredible. But Kautsky *directly mentions* my theses of December 26, 1917 on page 30 of his book.

Does he know these theses in full, or does he know only what was translated for him by Stein, Axelrod and Co.? Kautsky quotes my *third* thesis on the *fundamental* question of whether the Bolsheviks, *before* the elections to the Constituent Assembly, regarded a Soviet republic as superior to a bourgeois republic, and whether they told the *people* that. *But he does not quote the second thesis.*

The second thesis reads as follows:

> "While demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, revolutionary Social-Democracy has ever since the beginning of the revolution of 1917 *repeatedly emphasized that a republic of Soviets is a higher form of democracy than the usual bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly.*" (My italics.)

In order to represent the Bolsheviks as being devoid of all principles, as "revolutionary opportunists" (this is a term which Kautsky employs somewhere in his book, I forget in which connection), Mr. Kautsky *has concealed from his German readers* the fact that the theses contain a direct reference to "*repeated*" declarations!

Such are the petty, miserable and contemptible methods Mr. Kautsky employs! That is the way he has evaded the *theoretical* question.

Is it true or not that the bourgeois-democratic parliamentary republic is *inferior* to the Paris Commune or Soviet type of republic? This is the crux of the question, and Kautsky has evaded it. Kautsky has "forgotten" all that Marx said in his analysis of the Paris Commune. He has also "forgotten" Engels' letter to Bebel of March 28, 1875, in which Marx's idea is formulated in a particularly terse and clear fashion: "The Commune was no longer a state in the proper sense of the word."

Here is the most prominent theoretician of the Second International, in a special pamphlet on the *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, specially dealing with Russia, where the question of a state that is higher than a democratic bourgeois republic has been raised directly and repeatedly,

ignoring this very question. In what way does this differ *in fact* from desertion to the bourgeois camp?

(Let us observe in parenthesis that in this respect, too, Kautsky is merely following in the footsteps of the Russian Mensheviks. Among the latter there are any number of people who know "all the quotations" from Marx and Engels; but not a single Menshevik, from April to October 1917 and from October 1917 to October 1918, has *ever* made a *single* attempt to examine the question of the Paris Commune type of state. Plekhanov, too, has evaded the question. *It was wiser to remain silent.*)

It goes without saying that to discuss the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly with people who call themselves Socialists and Marxists, but who in practice desert to the bourgeoisie on the *main* question, the question of the Paris Commune type of state, would be casting pearls before swine. It will be sufficient for me to give the complete text of my thesis on the Constituent Assembly as an appendix to the present book. The reader will then see that the question was presented on December 26, 1917, theoretically, historically, and from the point of view of practical politics.

If Kautsky has completely renounced Marxism as a theoretician he might at least have examined the question of the struggle of the Soviet with the Constituent Assembly as a historian. We know from many of Kautsky's works that he *could* be a Marxian historian, and that *such* works of his will remain a permanent treasure of the proletariat in spite of his subsequent renegacy. But on this question Kautsky, even as a historian, *turns away* from the truth, ignores *well known* facts and behaves like a sycophant. He *wants* to represent the Bolsheviks as being devoid of principles and he tells his readers that they tried to *allay* the conflict with the Constituent Assembly before dispersing it. There is absolutely nothing to be ashamed of, we have nothing to recant: I give the theses in full and there it is said as clear as clear can be: Gentlemen of the vacillating petty bourgeoisie who have got into the Constituent Assembly, either reconcile yourselves to the proletarian dictatorship, or else we shall vanquish you by "revolutionary means" (theses 18 and 19).

That is how a really revolutionary proletariat has always behaved and always will behave towards the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

Kautsky adopts a formal standpoint on the question of the Constituent Assembly. My theses say clearly and repeatedly that the interests of the revolution are higher than the formal rights of the Constituent Assembly (see theses 16 and 17). The formal democratic point of view is precisely the point of view of the *bourgeois* democrat who refuses to admit that the interests of the proletariat and of the proletarian class struggle are supreme. As a historian, Kautsky would not have been able to deny that bourgeois parliaments are the organs of this or that class; but now (for the sordid purpose of renouncing revolution) Kautsky finds it necessary to forget his Marxism, and he refrains from *putting the question*: what *class* was the Constituent Assembly of Russia the organ of? Kautsky does not exam-

ine the concrete conditions, he does not want to face the facts, he does not say a single word to his German readers to suggest that the theses contained, not only a theoretical elucidation of the question of the limited character of bourgeois democracy (theses 1-3), not only an outline of the concrete conditions which determined the discrepancy between the Party candidate lists in the middle of October 1917 and the real state of affairs in December 1917 (theses 4-6), but also *a history of the class struggle and the civil war* in October-December 1917 (theses 7-15). From this concrete history we drew the conclusion (thesis 14) that the slogan "All power to the Constituent Assembly" had, in *reality*, become the slogan of the Cadets and the Kaledinites and their abettors.

Kautsky the historian fails to see this. Kautsky the historian has never heard that universal suffrage gives rise sometimes to petty-bourgeois, sometimes to reactionary and counter-revolutionary parliaments. Kautsky the Marxian historian has never heard that the form of elections, the form of democracy, is one thing, and the class content of the given institution is another. This question of the class content of the Constituent Assembly is directly put and answered in my theses. Perhaps my answer is wrong. Nothing would have been more welcome to us than a Marxian criticism of our analysis by an outsider. Instead of writing utterly silly phrases (of which there are plenty in Kautsky's book) about somebody preventing criticism of Bolshevism, he ought to have set out to make such a criticism. But the point is that he has no criticism to offer. He does not even *raise the question* of a class analysis of the Soviets on the one hand, and of the Constituent Assembly on the other. Hence it is *impossible* to argue, to debate with Kautsky, and all we can do is to *prove* to the reader why Kautsky cannot be called anything else than a renegade.

The divergence between the Soviets and the Constituent Assembly has its history, which even a historian who does not adopt the point of view of the class war could not have ignored. Kautsky would not even *touch* upon this actual history. Kautsky has concealed from his German readers the universally known fact (which only malicious Mensheviks now suppress) that the divergence between the Soviets and the "general state" (that is, bourgeois) institutions existed even under the rule of the Mensheviks, i. e., from the end of February to October 1917. Actually, Kautsky adopts the position of conciliation, compromise and collaboration between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. However much Kautsky may deny this, it is a fact which is borne out by his whole pamphlet. To say that the Constituent Assembly should not have been dispersed is tantamount to saying that the fight against the bourgeoisie should not have been fought to a finish, that the bourgeoisie should not have been overthrown and that the proletariat should have become reconciled with it.

Why has Kautsky said nothing about the fact that the Mensheviks were engaged in this inglorious work between February and October 1917 and did not achieve anything? If it was possible to reconcile the bour-

geoisie with the proletariat why did not the Mensheviks succeed in doing so? Why did the bourgeoisie stand aloof from the Soviets? Why did the *Mensheviks* call the Soviets "revolutionary democracy," and the bourgeoisie the "propertied elements"?

Kautsky has concealed from his German readers that it was precisely the Mensheviks who, in the "epoch" of their rule (February to October 1917), called the Soviets "revolutionary democracy," thereby admitting their superiority over all other institutions. It is only by concealing the fact that the historian Kautsky was able to make it appear that the divergence between the Soviets and the bourgeoisie had no history, that it arose instantaneously, suddenly, without cause, because of the bad behaviour of the Bolsheviks. As a matter of fact, it was precisely *the more than six months'* (an enormous period in time of revolution) *experience* of Menshevik compromise, of their attempts to reconcile the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, that convinced the people of the fruitlessness of these attempts and drove the proletariat away from the Mensheviks.

Kautsky admits that the Soviets are an excellent fighting organization of the proletariat, and that they have a great future before them. But, that being the case, Kautsky's position collapses like a house of cards, or like the dreams of a petty bourgeois who believes that the acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie can be avoided. For revolution is one continuous and desperate struggle, and the proletariat is the vanguard class of *all* the oppressed, the focus and centre of all the aspirations of all the oppressed for their emancipation! Naturally, therefore, the Soviets, as the organ of struggle of the oppressed masses, reflected and expressed the moods and changes of opinions of these masses ever so much more quickly, fully, and faithfully than any other institution (that, incidentally, is one of the reasons why Soviet democracy is the highest type of democracy).

In the period between February 28 (old style) and October 25, 1917, the Soviets managed to convene *two* All-Russian Congresses of representatives of the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia, of all the workers and soldiers, and of 70 or 80 per cent of the peasantry, not to mention the vast number of local, rural, urban, provincial, and regional congresses. During this period the bourgeoisie did not succeed in convening a single institution that represented the majority (except that obvious sham and mockery called the "Democratic Conference," which enraged the proletariat). The Constituent Assembly reflected the *same* mood of the masses and the *same* political grouping as the first (June) All-Russian Congress of Soviets. By the time the Constituent Assembly was convened (January 1918), the Second (October 1917) and Third (January 1918) Congresses of Soviets had met, both of which had demonstrated *as clear as clear could be* that the masses had swung to the Left, had become revolutionized, had turned away from the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and had passed over to the side of the Bolsheviks; *i.e.*, had turned away from petty-bourgeois leadership, from the illusion that it

was possible to reach a compromise with the bourgeoisie, and had joined the proletarian revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie

Hence, even the *external history* of the Soviets shows that the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly was inevitable and that this Assembly was a *reactionary* body But Kautsky sticks firmly to his "slogan" let "pure democracy" prevail though the revolution perish and the bourgeoisie triumph over the proletariat! *Fiat justitia, pereat mundus!* *

Here are the brief figures relating to the All Russian Congresses of Soviets in the course of the history of the Russian revolution

All Russian Congress of Soviets	Number of Delegates	Number of Bolsheviks	Percentage of Bolsheviks
First (June 3, 1917	790	103	13
Second (October 25,)1917)	675	343	51
Third (January 10, 1918)	710	434	61
Fourth (March 14, 1918)	1 232	795	64
Fifth (July 4, 1918)	1,164	773	66

It is enough to glance at these figures to understand why the defence of the Constituent Assembly and talk (like Kautsky's) about the Bolsheviks not having a majority of the population behind them is just ridiculed in Russia



THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION

As I have already pointed out, the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is not absolutely and necessarily a feature of the dictatorship of the proletariat And in Russia, the Bolsheviks, who long before October advanced the slogan of proletarian dictatorship, did not say anything in advance about disfranchising the exploiters *This* element of the dictatorship did not make its appearance "according to the plan" of any particular party, it *emerged* of its own accord in the course of the struggle Of course, Kautsky the historian failed to observe this He failed to understand that even when the Mensheviks (the advocates of compromise with the bourgeoisie) still ruled the Soviets, the bourgeoisie severed itself from the Soviets of its own accord, boycotted them, put itself up in opposition to them and intrigued against them The Soviets arose without any constitution and existed without one for *more than a year* (from the spring of 1917 to the summer of 1918) It was the fury of the bourgeoisie against this independent and omnipotent (because all embracing) organization of the oppressed, it was the unscrupulous, self seeking and sordid fight the bourgeoisie waged against the Soviets, and, lastly, it was the overt participation of bourgeoisie (from the Cadets to the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, from Milyukov to Kerensky) in the Kornilov mutiny, that *paved the way* for the formal exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the Soviets

* Let justice be done, even though the world may perish —*Ed*

Kautsky has heard about the Kornilov mutiny, but he majestically scorns historical facts and the course and forms of the struggle which determine the *forms* of the dictatorship. Indeed, what have facts got to do with "pure" democracy? That is why Kautsky's "criticism" of the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie is distinguished by such a—sweet naiveté, which would be touching in a child but is repulsive in a person who has not yet been officially certified as feeble-minded.

". . . If the capitalists find themselves in an insignificant minority under universal suffrage they will more readily be reconciled to their fate" (p. 33). . . . Charming, is it not? Clever Kautsky has seen many cases in history, and, of course, knows perfectly well from his own observations of life, of landlords and capitalists who defer to the will of the majority of the oppressed. Clever Kautsky firmly adopts the point of view of an "opposition," *i.e.*, the point of view of the parliamentary struggle. That is literally what he says: "opposition" (p. 34 and elsewhere).

Oh, learned historian and politician! It would not be amiss for you to know that "opposition" is a concept that belongs to the peaceful and only to the parliamentary struggle, *i.e.*, a concept that corresponds to a non-revolutionary situation, a concept that corresponds to a situation marked by an *absence of revolution.* During revolution we have to deal with a ruthless enemy in civil war; and no reactionary jeremiads of a petty bourgeois who fears such a war, as Kautsky does, will alter the fact. To examine the problems of ruthless civil war at a time when the bourgeoisie is prepared to commit any crime—the example of the Versaillese and their deals with Bismarck must mean something to every person who does not treat history like Gogol's Petrushka *—when the bourgeoisie is summoning foreign states to its aid and intriguing with them against the revolution—is simply comical. The revolutionary proletariat is to put on a nightcap, like "Muddle-headed Counsellor" Kautsky, and regard the bourgeoisie, which is organizing Dutov, Krasnov and Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary insurrections and is paying millions to saboteurs, as a legal "opposition." Oh, what profundity!

Kautsky is interested only in the formal, legal aspect of the question, and, reading his disquisitions on the Soviet constitution one involuntarily recalls Bebel's words: "Lawyers are thoroughpaced reactionaries." "In reality," Kautsky writes, "the capitalists alone cannot be disfranchised. What is a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? A property owner? Even in a country which has advanced so far along the path of economic progress as Germany, where the proletariat is so numerous, the establishment of a Soviet Republic would disfranchise large masses of the people. In 1907, the number of persons in the German Empire engaged in the three great occupational groups—agriculture, industry and commerce—togeth-

* *Petrushka*—a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, a semi-literate serf who read everything mechanically, syllable by syllable, without understanding its meaning.—*Ed.*

er with their families amounted roughly to thirty five million in the wage earners' and salaried employees' group, and seventeen million in the independent group. Hence, a party might well have a majority among the wage workers but a minority among the population as a whole" (p. 33)

This is an example of Kautsky's manner of argument Is it not the counter-revolutionary whining of a bourgeois? Why, Mr. Kautsky, have you relegated all in the "independent" group to the category of the disfranchised, when you know very well that the overwhelming majority of the Russian peasants do not employ hired labour, and do not, therefore, lose their political rights? Is this not falsification?

Why, oh learned economist, did you not quote the facts with which you are perfectly familiar and which are to be found in those same German statistical returns for 1907 relating to hired labour in agriculture according to size of farms? Why did you not quote these facts for the benefit of the German workers, the readers of your pamphlet, and thus enable them to see *how many exploiters there are*, and how few they are compared with the total number of "farmers" who figure in German statistics?

Because your renegacy has transformed you into a mere sycophant of the bourgeoisie.

The term capitalist, don't you see, is legally a vague concept, and Kautsky for the space of several pages thunders against the "tyranny" of the Soviet Constitution. This "serious scholar" has no objection to the British bourgeoisie taking several centuries to work out and develop a new (new for the Middle Ages) bourgeois constitution, but, representative of lackey's science that he is, he will allow no time to us, the workers and peasants of Russia. He expects us to have a constitution all complete to the very last word in a few months . . .

"Tyranny!" Consider what a depth of vile subserviency to the bourgeoisie and idiotic pedantry is contained in *such* a reproach When thoroughly bourgeois and for the most part reactionary lawyers in the capitalist countries have for centuries or decades been drawing up most detailed rules and regulations and writing scores and hundreds of volumes of laws and interpretations of laws to *oppress* the workers, to bind the *poor man* hand and foot and to place a thousand and one hindrances and obstacles in the way of the common labouring people—oh, there the bourgeois liberals and Mr. Kautsky see no "tyranny." That is "law" and "order": the ways in which the poor are to be "kept down" have all been thought out and written down. There are thousands and thousands of bourgeois lawyers and bureaucrats (about them Kautsky says nothing at all, probably just because Marx attached enormous significance to *smashing* the bureaucratic machine. . .)—lawyers and bureaucrats who are able to interpret the laws in such a way that the worker and the average peasant can never break through the barbed wire entanglements of these laws. This, of course, is not "tyranny" on the part of the bourgeoisie, it is not the dictatorship of the sordid and self seeking exploiters who are sucking the blood of the

people. Oh, no! It is "pure democracy," which is becoming purer and purer every day.

But now that the toiling and exploited classes, for the first time in history, while cut off by the imperialist war from their brothers across the frontier, have set up *their own* Soviets, have called to the work of political construction *those masses* which the bourgeoisie used to oppress, grind and stupefy and have begun *themselves* to build a *new*, proletarian state, have begun in the heat of furious struggle, in the fire of civil war, to *sketch* the fundamental principles of a state *without exploiters*—all the scoundrelly bourgeois, the whole gang of bloodsuckers, with Kautsky echoing them, howl about "tyranny"! Indeed, how will these ignorant people, these workers and peasants, this "riff-raff," be able to interpret their laws? How can these common labourers acquire a sense of justice without the counsel of educated lawyers, of bourgeois writers, of the Kautskys and the wise old bureaucrats?

Mr. Kautsky quotes from my speech of April 29, 1918, the words: "The masses themselves determine the procedure and the time of elections." And Kautsky, the "pure democrat," infers from this:

> ". . . Hence, it would mean that every assembly of electors may determine the procedure of elections at their own discretion. Tyranny and the opportunity of getting rid of undesirable opposition elements in the ranks of the proletariat itself would thus be carried to a high degree" (p. 37).

Well, how does this differ from the talk of a hired capitalist hack who howls about the masses oppressing "industrious" workers who are "willing to work" during a strike? Why is the *bourgeois* bureaucratic method of determining electoral procedure under "pure," bourgeois democracy *not* tyranny? Why should the sense of justice *among the masses who have risen to fight* their age-long exploiters and who are being educated and steeled in this desperate struggle be less than that of a *handful* of bureaucrats, intellectuals and lawyers who are steeped in *bourgeois* prejudices?

Kautsky is a true Socialist. Don't dare suspect the sincerity of this very respectable father of a family, of this very honest citizen. He is an ardent and convinced supporter of the victory of the workers, of the proletarian revolution. All he wants is that the sentimental petty-bourgeois intellectuals and philistines in nightcaps should first *of all—before* the masses begin to move, *before* they enter into furious battle with the exploiters, and certainly *without* civil war—draw up a moderate and precise set of *rules for the development of the revolution*. . . .

Burning with profound moral indignation, our most learned Judas Golovlev* tells the German workers that on June 14, 1918, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets resolved to expel the repre-

* *Judas Golovlev*—a character in M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin's *The Golovlev Family*, personifying the pious hypocrite.—*Ed.*

sentatives of the Right Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties from the Soviets "This measure," writes Judushka Kautsky, all afire with noble indignation, "is not directed against definite persons guilty of definite punishable offences The constitution of the Soviet Republic does not contain a single word about the immunity of Soviet deputies It is not definite *persons*, but definite *parties* that are expelled from the Soviets" (p 37)

Yes, that is really awful, an intolerable departure from pure democracy, according to the rules of which our revolutionary Judushka Kautsky will make the revolution We Russian Bolsheviks should first have guaranteed immunity to the Savinkovs* and Co , to the Lieberdans,** Potresovs*** ("activists") and Co , then drawn up a criminal code proclaiming participation in the Czechoslovak counter revolutionary war, or in the alliance with the German imperialists in the Ukraine or in Georgia *against* the workers of one's own country, to be "punishable offences," and *only then*, on the basis of this criminal code, should we have been justified, in accordance with the principles of "pure democracy," in expelling "definite persons" from the Soviets It goes without saying that the Czechoslovaks, who were subsidized by the British and French capitalists through the medium, or thanks to the agitation of the Savinkovs, Potresovs and Lieberdans, and the Krasnovs, who received shells from the Germans through the medium of the Ukrainian and Tiflis Mensheviks, would have sat quietly waiting until we were ready with our proper criminal code, and, like the purest democrats they are, would have confined themselves to the role of an "opposition" ..

No less moral indignation is aroused in Kautsky's breast by the fact that the Soviet Constitution disfranchises all those who "employ hired labour with a view to profit " "A home worker, or a small master employing only one journeyman," Kautsky writes, "may live and feel *quite like a proletarian, but he has no vote!" (P. 36)*

What a departure from "pure democracy"! What an injustice! True, up to now all Marxists have thought—and thousands of facts have proved it—that the small masters were the most unscrupulous and grasping exploiters of hired labour, but our Judushka Kautsky takes the small masters not as a *class* (who invented the pernicious theory of the class struggle?) but as single individuals, exploiters who "live and feel quite like proletarians " The famous "thrifty Agnes," who was considered dead and buried long ago, has come to life again under Kautsky's pen This "thrifty Agnes" was invented and launched into German literature some decades ago by that "pure" democrat and bourgeois Eugen Richter He predicted untold calamities that would follow the dictatorship of the

* B V *Savinkov* (1879 1925)—a Socialist Revolutionary —*Ed*

** *Lieberdan*—a nickname applied ironically to the Mensheviks coined from the names of two Menshevik leaders—Lieber and Dan —*Ed*

*** *A N Potresov* (1869 1934)—a Menshevik leader —*Ed*

proletariat, the confiscation of the capital of the exploiters, and asked with an innocent air: what was a capitalist in the legal sense of the term? He took as an example a poor, thrifty seamstress ("thrifty Agnes"), whom the wicked "dictators of the proletariat" rob of her last farthing. There was a time when the whole German Social-Democracy used to poke fun at this "thrifty Agnes" of the pure democrat, Eugen Richter. But that was a long, long time ago, when Bebel, who frankly and bluntly declared that there were many National-Liberals in his party, was still alive; that was very long ago, when Kautsky was not yet a renegade.

Now "thrifty Agnes" has come to life again in the person of the "small master who lives and feels quite like a proletarian," and who employs "only one" journeyman. The wicked Bolsheviks are wronging him, depriving him of his vote! It is true that "every assembly of electors" in the Soviet Republic, as Kautsky tells us, may admit into its midst a poor little master who, for instance, may be connected with this or that factory, if, by way of an exception, he is not an exploiter, and if he *really* "lives and feels quite like a proletarian." But can one rely on the knowledge of life, on the sense of justice of an irregular factory meeting of common workers acting (oh horror!) without a written code? Would it not clearly be better to grant the vote to *all* exploiters, to *all* who employ hired labour, rather than risk the possibility of "thrifty Agnes" and the "small master who lives and feels quite like a proletarian" being wronged by the workers?

* * *

Let the contemptible scoundrels and renegades, amidst the applause of the bourgeoisie and the social-chauvinists,* abuse our Soviet Constitution for disfranchising the exploiters! That is well, because it will accelerate and widen the split between the revolutionary workers of Europe and the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and Ramsay MacDonalds, and all the old leaders and old betrayers of Socialism.

The masses of the oppressed classes, the class-conscious and honest revolutionary proletarian leaders, will be on *our side*. It will be sufficient to acquaint such proletarians and such masses with our Soviet Constitution for them to say at once: "These are really *our people*, this is a real workers' party, this is a real workers' government; for it does not deceive the workers by talking about reforms *in the way all the above-*

---

* I have just read a leading article in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* (No. 293, October 22, 1918), giving an enthusiastic summary of Kautsky's pamphlet. This organ of the Stock Exchange is satisfied. And no wonder! And a comrade writes to me from Berlin that the *Vorwärts*, the organ of the Scheidemanns, has declared in a special article that it subscribes to almost every line Kautsky has written. Hearty congratulations!

mentioned leaders have done, but is seriously fighting the exploiters, is seriously making a revolution, and is *really* fighting for the complete emancipation of the workers "

The *fact that after twelve months'* "experience" the Soviets are depriving the exploiters of the franchise *shows* that the Soviets are really organizations of the oppressed masses and not of social imperialists and social pacifists who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie The *fact* that the Soviets have disfranchised the exploiters *shows* that they are not organs of petty bourgeois compromise with the capitalists, not organs of parliamentary chatter (on the part of the Kautskys, the Longuets and the MacDonalds), but organs of the genuinely revolutionary proletariat which is waging a life and death struggle against the exploiters

"Kautsky's pamphlet is almost unknown here," a well informed comrade in Berlin wrote to me a few days ago (today is October 30) I would advise our ambassadors in Germany and Switzerland not to stint a thousand or so in buying up this book and *distributing it gratis* among the class conscious workers in order to trample in the mud this "European" —read imperialist and reformist—Social Democracy, which has long been a "stinking corpse "

* * *

At the end of his book, on pages 61 and 63, Mr Kautsky bitterly laments the fact that the "new theory" (as he calls Bolshevism, fearing even to touch Marx's and Engels' analysis of the Paris Commune) "finds supporters even in old democracies like Switzerland, for instance " Kautsky "cannot understand how this theory can be adopted by German Social-Democrats "

No, it is quite understandable, for after the serious lessons of the war the revolutionary masses are becoming sick and tired of the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys

"We have always been in favour of democracy," Kautsky writes, "yet we are supposed suddenly to have renounced it?"

"We," the opportunists of Social Democracy, have always been opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and Kolbs and Co proclaimed this *long ago* Kautsky knows this and it is futile for him to imagine that he can conceal from his readers the obvious fact that he has "returned to the fold" of the Bernsteins and Kolbs

"We," the revolutionary Marxists, have never made a fetish of "pure" (bourgeois) democracy As is known, in 1903 Plekhanov was a revolutionary Marxist (before his lamentable turn, which brought him to the position of a Russian Scheidemann) And in that year Plekhanov declared at the congress of our Party, which was then adopting its program, that in the revolution the proletariat would, if necessary, disfranchise the capitalists and *disperse any parliament* that was found to be counter revo

lutionary. That this is the only view that corresponds to Marxism will be clear to anybody even from the statements of Marx and Engels which I have quoted above; it follows logically from all the fundamental principles of Marxism.

"We," the revolutionary Marxists, never made the speeches to the people that the Kautskyans of all nations love to make, cringing before the bourgeoisie, adapting themselves to bourgeois parliamentarism, keeping silent about the *bourgeois* character of modern democracy and demanding only *its* extension, only that *it* be carried to its logical conclusion.

"We" said to the bourgeoisie: "You, exploiters and hypocrites, talk about democracy, while at every step you create a thousand and one obstacles to prevent the *oppressed masses* from taking part in politics. We take you at your word and, in the interests of these masses, demand the extension of *your* bourgeois democracy *in order to prepare the masses for revolution* for the purpose of overthrowing you, the exploiters. And if you exploiters attempt to offer resistance to our proletarian revolution we will ruthlessly suppress you; we will deprive you of all rights; more than that, we will not give you any bread, for in our proletarian republic the exploiters will have no rights, they will be deprived of fire and water, for we are Socialists in real earnest, and not of the Scheidemann, Kautsky type."

That is what "we," the revolutionary Marxists, said, and will say—and that is why the oppressed masses will support us and be with us, while the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys will be swept into the renegades' cesspool.

WHAT IS INTERNATIONALISM?

Kautsky is quite convinced that he is an internationalist and calls himself one. The Scheidemanns he calls "government Socialists." But in defending the Mensheviks (he does not openly express his solidarity with them, but he entirely expresses their views), Kautsky has glaringly revealed the sort of "internationalism" he subscribes to. And since Kautsky is not alone, but is the representative of a trend which inevitably grew up in the atmosphere of the Second International (Longuet in France, Turati in Italy, Nobs and Grimm, Grabber and Naine in Switzerland, Ramsay MacDonald in England, etc.), it will be instructive to dwell on Kautsky's "internationalism."

After emphasizing that the Mensheviks also attended the Zimmerwald Conference (a diploma, certainly, but a tainted one), Kautsky sets forth the views of the Mensheviks, with whom he agrees, in the following manner:

". . . The Mensheviks wanted a general peace. They wanted all the belligerents to adopt the formula: No annexations and no indemnities.

Until this had been achieved, the Russian army, according to this view, was to stand ready for battle The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, demanded an immediate peace at any price, they were prepared, if need be, to make a separate peace, they tried to extort it by force by increasing the state of disorganization of the army, which was already bad enough" (p 27) In Kautsky's opinion the Bolsheviks should not have taken power, and should have been satisfied with a Constituent Assembly

Thus, the internationalism of Kautsky and the Mensheviks amounted to this to demand reforms from the imperialist bourgeois government, but to continue to support it, and to continue to support the war that this government was waging until all the belligerents had accepted the formula No annexations and no indemnities This view was repeatedly expressed by Turati, and by the Kautskyans (Haase and others), and by Longuet and Co , who declared that they stood *for* "defence of the fatherland "

Theoretically, this shows a complete inability to dissociate oneself from the social chauvinists and complete confusion on the question of the defence of the fatherland Politically, it means substituting petty bourgeois nationalism for internationalism, and deserting to the reformists' camp and renouncing revolution

From the point of view of the proletariat, recognizing "defence of the fatherland" means justifying the present war, admitting that it is legitimate And since the war remains an imperialist war (both under a monarchy and under a republic), irrespective of the territory—mine or the enemy's—occupied by the enemy troops at the given moment, recognizing defence of the fatherland is tantamount, *in fact*, to supporting the imperialist, predatory bourgeoisie, and to an utter betrayal of Socialism In Russia, even under Kerensky, under the bourgeois-democratic republic, the war continued to be an imperialist war, for it was being waged by the bourgeoisie as a ruling class (war is the "continuation of politics'), and a very striking expression of the imperialist character of the war was the secret treaties for the partitioning of the world and the plunder of other countries which had been concluded by the ex tsar with the capitalists of England and France.

The Mensheviks deceived the people in a most despicable manner by calling this war a defensive or revolutionary war And by approving the policy of the Mensheviks, Kautsky is approving the deception practised on the people, is approving the part played by the petty bourgeoisie in helping capital to trick the workers and to harness them to the chariot of the imperialists Kautsky is pursuing a characteristically petty bourgeois philistine policy by pretending (and trying to make the masses believe the absurd idea) that *putting forward a slogan* alters the position The entire history of bourgeois democracy refutes this illusion, the bourgeois democrats have always advanced and still advance all sorts of "slogans" in order to deceive the people The point is to *test* their sincerity, to compare their

words with their *deeds*, not to be satisfied with idealistic or charla *phrases*, but to get down to *class reality*. An imperialist war does not ce to be an imperialist war when charlatans or phrasemongers or petty-bo geois philistines put forward sentimental "slogans," but only when *class* which is conducting the imperialist war, and is bound to it by milli of economic threads (and even ropes), is really *overthrown* and is replace the helm of state by the really revolutionary class, the proletariat. *Ther no other way of getting out of an imperialist war, or out of an imperialist p datory peace.*

By approving the foreign policy of the Mensheviks, and by declarin to be internationalist and Zimmerwaldian, Kautsky, first, reveals the u rottenness of the opportunist Zimmerwald majority (it was not with reason that we, the *Left* Zimmerwaldians, at once dissociated ourse from such a majority!), and, secondly—and this is the chief thing—pa from the position of the proletariat to the position of the petty bourgeo: from the revolutionary position to the reformist position.

The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperia bourgeoisie; the petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improveme of imperialism, for adaptation and *submission* to it. When Kautsky still a Marxist, for example, in 1909, when he wrote his *Road to Power* was the idea that war would inevitably lead to *revolution* that he expou ed, and he spoke of the approach of an *era of revolutions*. The B Manifesto of 1912 plainly and definitely speaks of a *proletarian revolu* in connection with that very imperialist war between the German and British groups which actually broke out in 1914. But in 1918, when re lutions did begin in connection with war, Kautsky, instead of explair that they were inevitable, instead of pondering over and thinking out *revolutionary* tactics and the means and methods of preparing for revo tion, began to describe the reformist tactics of the Mensheviks as inter tionalism. Is not this renegacy?

Kautsky praises the Mensheviks for having insisted on maintair the fighting efficiency of the army, and he blames the Bolsheviks for h ing increased the state of "disorganization of the army," which was alre disorganized enough as it was. This means praising reformism and s mission to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and blaming and abjuring revo tion. For under Kerensky the maintenance of the fighting efficiency of army meant its maintenance under *bourgeois* (albeit republican) comma Everybody knows, and the progress of events has confirmed it, that republican army preserved the *Kornilov* spirit, because the commanc staff was Kornilovite. The bourgeois officers could not help being Korni ites; they could not help gravitating towards imperialism and towa the forcible suppression of the proletariat. All that the Menshevik tac amounted to *in practice* was to leave all the foundations of the imperia war and all the foundations of the *bourgeois* dictatorship intact, to patch details and to daub over a few trifles ("reforms").

On the other hand, not a single great revolution has ever taken place, or ever will take place, without the "disorganization" of the army. For the army is the most rigid instrument for supporting the old regime, the most hardened bulwark of bourgeois discipline, buttressing up the rule of capital, and preserving among the working people and imbuing them with the servile spirit of submission and subjection to capital Counter-revolution has never tolerated, and never could tolerate, armed workers side by side with the army. In France, Engels wrote, after every revolution the workers were armed "therefore the disarming of the workers was the first commandment of the bourgeois at the helm of the state." The armed workers were the embryo of a *new* army, the nucleus of the organization of a *new* social order The first commandment of the bourgeoisie was to crush this nucleus and prevent it from growing. The first commandment of every victorious revolution, as Marx and Engels repeatedly emphasized, was to smash the old army, dissolve it and replace it by a new one. A new social class, when rising to power, never could, and cannot now, attain power and consolidate it except by completely disintegrating the old army ("Disorganization!" the reactionary or just cowardly philistines howl on this score), except by passing through a most difficult and painful period without any army (the Great French Revolution also passed through such a painful period), and by gradually building up, in the midst of stern civil war, a new army, a new discipline, a new military organization of the new class Formerly, Kautsky the historian understood this. Kautsky the renegade has forgotten it.

What right has Kautsky to call the Scheidemanns "government Socialists" if he *approves* of the tactics of the Mensheviks in the Russian revolution? In supporting Kerensky and joining his Ministry, the Mensheviks were also government Socialists. Kautsky cannot wriggle out of this conclusion if he attempts to raise the question of the *ruling class* which is waging the imperialist war. But Kautsky avoids raising the question of the ruling class, a question that is imperative for a Marxist, for the mere raising of it would expose the renegade

The Kautskyans in Germany, the Longuetites in France, and the Turatis and Co in Italy argue in this way· Socialism presupposes the equality and freedom of nations, their self-determination, *hence*, when our country is attacked, or when enemy troops invade our territory, it is the right and duty of the Socialists to defend their country. But theoretically such an argument is either a sheer mockery of Socialism or a fraudulent evasion, while from the point of view of practical politics, it coincides with that of the quite ignorant muzhik who has even no conception of the social, class character of the war, and of the tasks of a revolutionary party during a reactionary war.

Socialism is opposed to violence against nations. That is indisputable. But Socialism is opposed to violence against men in general. Apart from Christian anarchists and Tolstoyans, however, no one has yet drawn the

conclusion from this that Socialism is opposed to *revolutionary* violence. Hence, to talk about "violence" in general, without examining the conditions which distinguish reactionary from revolutionary violence, means being a petty bourgeois who renounces revolution, or else it means simply deceiving oneself and others by sophistry.

The same holds true of violence against nations. Every war implies violence against nations, but that does not prevent Socialists from being in *favour* of a revolutionary war. The class character of the war—that is the fundamental question which confronts a Socialist (if he is not a renegade). The imperialist war of 1914-18 is a war between two coalitions of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the partitioning of the world, for the division of the booty, and for the plunder and strangulation of small and weak nations. This was the appraisal of war given in the Basle Manifesto in 1912, and it has been confirmed by the facts. Whoever departs from this view of war ceases to be a Socialist.

If a German under Wilhelm or a Frenchman under Clemenceau says, "It is my right and duty as a Socialist to defend my country if it is invaded by an enemy," he argues not like a Socialist, not like an internationalist, not like a revolutionary proletarian, but like a *petty-bourgeois nationalist*. Because this argument leaves out of account the revolutionary class struggle of the workers against capital, it leaves out of account the appraisal of the war as a *whole* from the point of view of the world bourgeoisie and the world proletariat: that is, it leaves out of account internationalism, and all that remains is a miserable and narrow-minded nationalism. My country is being wronged, that is all I care about—that is what this argument reduces itself to, and that is where its petty-bourgeois nationalist narrow-mindedness lies. It is the same as if in regard to individual violence, violence against an individual, one were to argue that Socialism is opposed to violence and therefore I would rather be a traitor than go to prison.

The Frenchman, German or Italian who says: "Socialism is opposed to violence against nations, *therefore* I defend myself when my country is invaded," *betrays* Socialism and internationalism, because *he only thinks of his own* "country," he puts "his own" . . . "*bourgeoisie*" above everything else and does not give a thought to the *international connections* which make the war an imperialist war and *h i s* bourgeoisie a link in the chain of imperialist plunder.

All philistines and all stupid and ignorant yokels argue in the same way as the renegade Kautskyans, Longuetites, Turatis and Co.: "The enemy has invaded my country, I don't care about anything else."*

* The social-chauvinists (the Scheidemanns, Renaudels, Hendersons, Gomperses and Co.) absolutely refuse to talk about the "International" during the war. They regard the enemies of their respective bourgeoisies as "traitors" to . . . Socialism. They *support* the policy of conquest pursued by their respective bourgeoisies. The social-pacifists (*i.e.*, Socialists in words and petty-bourgeois pacifists in practice) express all sorts of "internationalist" sentiments, protest against

The Socialist, the revolutionary proletarian, the internationalist, ar gues differently He says "The character of the war (whether reactionar or revolutionary) is not determined by who the aggressor was, or whose ter ritory is occupied by the 'enemy', it is *determined by the class* that is wag ing the war, and the politics of which this war is a continuation If th war is a reactionary, imperialist war, that is, if it is being waged by tw world coalitions of the imperialist, violent, predatory, reactionary bour geoisie, then every bourgeoisie (even of the smallest country) becomes participant in the plunder, and my duty as a representative of the revolu tionary proletariat is to prepare for the *world proletarian revolution* as the *o n l y* escape from the horrors of a world war I must argue, not from the point of view of 'my' country (for that is the argument of a poor, stupid nationalist philistine who does not realize that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of *my share* in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution "

That is what internationalism means, and that is the duty of the internationalist, of the revolutionary worker, of the genuine Socialist That is the *ABC* that Kautsky the renegade has "forgotten " And his renegacy becomes still more palpable when he passes from approving the tactics of the petty bourgeois nationalists (the Mensheviks in Russia, the Longuetites in France, the Turatis in Italy, and Haases and Co in Germany), to criticizing the Bolshevik tactics Here is his criticism

> "The Bolshevik revolution was based on the assumption that it would become the starting point of a general European revolution, that the bold initiative of Russia would rouse the proletarians of all Europe to insurrection
>
> "On this assumption it was, of course, immaterial what forms the Russian separate peace would take, what hardships and territorial mutilations (*Verstummelungen*) it would cause the Russian people, and what interpretation of the self determination of nations it would give It was also immaterial whether Russia was able to defend herself or not According to this opinion, the European revolution would be the best protection of the Russian revolution, and would bring complete and genuine self determination to all the peoples inhabiting the former Russian territory.
>
> "A revolution in Europe, which would establish and consolidate the Socialist order there, would also become the means of removing the obstacles to the introduction of the Socialist system of production that would arise in Russia owing to the economic backwardness of the country.

rl
er
rds

on his lips

"All this would be very logical and very sound if the main assumption were granted, *viz.*, that the Russian revolution would infallibly let loose a European revolution. But what if that did not happen?'

"So far the assumption has not been justified. And the proletarians of Europe are now being accused of having abandoned and betrayed the Russian revolution. This is an accusation levelled against unknown persons, for who is to be held responsible for the behaviour of the European proletariat?" (P. 28.)

And Kautsky then goes on to repeat again and again that Marx, Engels and Bebel were more than once mistaken about the advent of revolutions they had anticipated, but that they never based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution at a "*definite date*" (p. 29), whereas, he says, the Bolsheviks "staked everything on one card, on a general European revolution."

We nave deliberately quoted this long passage in order to show our readers with what "agility" Kautsky counterfeits Marxism by palming off his banal and reactionary philistine view in its stead.

First, to ascribe to an opponent an obvious stupidity and then to refute it is a trick that is played by not over-clever people. If the Bolsheviks had based their tactics on the expectation of a revolution in other countries *by a definite date*, that would have been an undeniable stupidity. But the Bolshevik Party has never been guilty of such stupidity. In my letter to the American workers (August 20, 1918), I expressly guard against anything so foolish by saying that we counted on an American revolution, but not by any definite date. I propounded the very same idea more than once in my controversy with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the "Left Communists" (January-March 1918). Kautsky has committed a slight . . . just a very slight forgery, on which he in fact based his criticism of Bolshevism. Kautsky has confused tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution in the more or less early future, but not at a definite date, with tactics based on the expectation of a European revolution at a definite date. A slight, just a very slight forgery!

The last-named tactics are foolish. The first-named are *obligatory* for a Marxist, for every revolutionary proletarian and internationalist;—*obligatory*, because they alone take into account in a proper Marxian way the objective situation brought about by the war in all European countries, and they alone conform to the international tasks of the proletariat.

By substituting the petty question about an error which the Bolshevik revolutionaries might have made, but did not, for the important question of the foundations of revolutionary tactics in general, Kautsky adroitly abjures all revolutionary tactics!

A renegade in politics, he is *unable even to present the question* of the objective prerequisites of revolutionary tactics theoretically.

And this brings us to the second point

Secondly, it is obligatory for a Marxist to count on a European revolution if a *revolutionary situation* exists It is an elementary axiom of Marxism that the tactics of the Socialist proletariat cannot be the same bot when there is a revolutionary situation and when there is no revolutionar situation

If Kautsky had put this question, which is obligatory for a Marxist, h would have seen that the answer was absolutely against him Long befor the war, all Marxists, all Socialists, were agreed that a European war woul create a revolutionary situation Kautsky himself, before he became a renegade, clearly and definitely admitted this—in 1902 (in his *Social Revolution*) and in 1909 (in his *Road to Power*) It was also admitted in the name o the entire Second International in the Basle Manifesto, it is not withou reason that the social chauvinists and Kautskyans (the "Centrists," *i e* those who waver between the revolutionaries and the opportunists) of al countries shun like the plague the declarations of the Basle Manifesto o this score

Hence, the expectation of a revolutionary situation in Europe was not a infatuation of the Bolsheviks, but the *general opinion* of all Marxists Whe Kautsky tries to escape from this undoubted truth with the help of such phrases as that the Bolsheviks "always believed in the omnipotence of forc and will," he simply utters a sonorous and empty phrase to *cover up* hi evasion, a shameful evasion, of the question of a revolutionary situation

To proceed Has a revolutionary situation begun or not? Kautsky did not present even this question The economic facts provide an answer the famine and ruin created everywhere by the war imply a revolutionary situation The political facts also provide an answer ever since 1915 a splitting process is clearly to be observed in *all* countries within the old and decaying Socialist parties, a process of *departure of the masses* of the proletariat from the social chauvinist leaders to the Left, to revolutionary ideas and sentiments, to revolutionary leaders

Only a person who dreads revolution and betrays it could have failed to note these facts on August 5, 1918, when Kautsky was writing his pamphlet And now, at the end of October 1918, the revolution is growing *in a number* of European countries, and growing very rapidly under our very eyes Kautsky the "revolutionary," who still wants to be regarded as a Marxist, has proved to be a short sighted philistine, who, like those philistines of 1847 whom Marx ridiculed, did not see the approaching revolution!!

And now we come to the third point

Thirdly, what should be the specific features of revolutionary tactics in a European revolutionary situation? Having become a renegade, Kautsky feared to put this question, which is obligatory for every Marxist Kautsky argues like a typical philistine petty bourgeois, or like an ignorant peasant has a "general European revolution" begun or not? If it has, then *he too* is prepared to become a revolutionary! But then, let us observe, every

blackguard (like the scoundrels who are now trying to attach themselves to the victorious Bolsheviks) would proclaim himself a revolutionary!

If it has not, then Kautsky will turn his back on revolution! Kautsky does not betray a shadow of an understanding of the truth that a revolutionary Marxist differs from the ordinary philistine by his ability to *preach* to the uneducated masses that the maturing revolution is necessary, to *prove* that it is inevitable, to *explain* its benefits to the people, and to *prepare* the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses for it.

Kautsky ascribed to the Bolsheviks an absurdity, namely, that they had staked everything on one card, on a European revolution breaking out at a definite date. This absurdity has turned against Kautsky himself, because the logical conclusion of his argument is that the tactics of the Bolsheviks would have been correct if a European revolution had broken out by August 5, 1918! That is the date Kautsky mentions as the time he wrote his pamphlet. And when, a few weeks after this August 5, it became clear that revolution was impending in a number of European countries, the whole renegacy of Kautsky, his whole falsification of Marxism, and his utter inability to reason or even to present questions in a revolutionary manner, became revealed in all their charm.

When the proletarians of Europe are accused of treachery, Kautsky writes, it is an accusation levelled at unknown persons.

You are mistaken, Mr. Kautsky! Look in the mirror and you will see those "unknown persons" against whom this accusation is levelled. Kautsky assumes an air of innocence and pretends not to understand *who* levelled the accusation, and its *meaning*. As a matter of fact Kautsky knows perfectly well that the accusation has been and is being levelled by the German "Lefts," by the Spartacists, by Liebknecht and his friends. The accusation expresses a *clear appreciation* of the fact that the German proletariat betrayed the Russian (and international) revolution when it strangled Finland, the Ukraine, Latvia, and Esthonia. This accusation is levelled primarily and above all, not against the *masses*, who are always downtrodden, but against those *leaders* who, like the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, *failed* in their duty to carry on revolutionary agitation, revolutionary propaganda and revolutionary work among the masses to overcome their inertness, who in fact worked *against* the revolutionary instincts and aspirations which are always aglow deep down among the masses of the oppressed class. The Scheidemanns bluntly, crudely, cynically, and in most cases from corrupt motives betrayed the proletariat and deserted to the bourgeoisie. The Kautskyans and the Longuetites did the same thing, only hesitatingly and haltingly, and casting cowardly side-glances at those who were stronger at the moment. In all his writings during the war Kautsky tried to *extinguish* the revolutionary spirit, instead of fostering and fanning it.

The fact that Kautsky does not even understand the enormous *theoretical importance*, and the even greater agitational and propaganda importance, of the "accusation" that the proletarians of Europe have betrayed the

Russian revolution will remain a regular historical monument to the philistine stupidity of the "average" leader of German official Social Democracy! Kautsky does not understand that, owing to the censorship prevailing in the German "Empire," this "accusation" is perhaps the only form in which the German Socialists who have not betrayed Socialism—Liebknecht and his friends—could express *their appeal to the German workers* to throw off the Scheidemanns and the Kautskys, to push aside such "leaders," to emancipate themselves from their stultifying and vulgar propaganda, to rise in revolt *in spite of* them, *without* them, and march over their heads *towards revolution*!

Kautsky does not understand this How is he to understand the tactics of the Bolsheviks? Can a man who renounces revolution in general be expected to weigh and appraise the conditions of the development of revolution in one of its most "difficult" cases?

The Bolsheviks' tactics were correct, they were the *only* internationalist tactics, because they were based, not on the cowardly fear of a world revolution, not on a philistine "disbelief" in it, not on the narrow nationalist desire to protect one's "own" fatherland (the fatherland of one's own bourgeoisie), while not "caring a hang" for all the rest, but on a correct (and, before the war and before the renegacy of the social chauvinists and social pacifists, a universally admitted) *estimation* of the revolutionary situation in Europe These tactics were the only internationalist tactics, because they did the utmost possible in one country *for* the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries* The correctness of these tactics has been confirmed by their enormous success, for Bolshevism (not by any means because of the merits of the Russian Bolsheviks, but because of the most profound sympathy of the *masses* everywhere for tactics that are revolutionary in practice) has become *world* Bolshevism, has produced an idea, a theory, a program and tactics, which differ concretely and practically from those of social chauvinism and social pacifism Bolshevism has vanquished the old, decayed International of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, Renaudels and Longuets, Hendersons and the MacDonalds, who henceforth will be treading on each other's heels, dreaming about "unity" and trying to revive a corpse Bolshevism has *created* the ideological and tactical foundations of a Third International, of a really proletarian and Communist International, which will take into consideration both the gains of the peaceful epoch and the experience of the *epoch of revolution, which has now begun*

Bolshevism has popularized throughout the world the idea of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," has translated these words from the Latin, first into Russian, and then into *all* the languages of the world, and has shown by the living example of the *Soviet power* that the workers and poor peasants, *even* of a backward country, even with the least experience, education and habits of organization, *have been able* for a whole year, amidst gigantic difficulties and amidst a struggle against the exploiters

(who were supported by the bourgeoisie of the *whole* world) to maintain the power of the toilers, to create a democracy that is immeasurably higher and broader than all previous democracies in the world, and to *start* the creative work of tens of millions of workers and peasants for the practical realization of Socialism.

Bolshevism has helped in fact to develop the proletarian revolution in Europe and America more powerfully than any party in any other country has so far succeeded in doing. While the workers of the whole world are realizing more and more clearly every day that the tactics of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys have not delivered them from the imperialist war and from wage-slavery to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and that these tactics cannot serve as a model for all countries, the masses of the proletarians of all countries are realizing more and more clearly every day that Bolshevism has indicated the right road of escape from the horrors of war and imperialism, that Bolshevism *can serve as a model of tactics for all.*

Not only the general European, but the world proletarian revolution is maturing before the eyes of all, and it has been assisted, accelerated and supported by the victory of the proletariat in Russia. All this is not enough for the complete victory of Socialism, you say? Of course it is not enough. One country alone cannot do more. But this one country, thanks to the Soviet form of government, has done so much that even if the Russian Soviet government were to be crushed by world imperialism to-morrow, as a result, let us say, of an agreement between German and Anglo-French imperialism—even granted that worst possibility—it would still be found that Bolshevik tactics have brought enormous benefit to Socialism and have assisted the growth of the invincible world revolution.

SUBSERVIENCY TO THE BOURGEOISIE IN THE GUISE OF "ECONOMIC ANALYSIS"

As has been said already, if the title of Kautsky's book were properly to reflect its contents, it should have been called, not *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, but *A Rehash of Bourgeois Attacks on the Bolsheviks.*

The old Menshevik "theories" about the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution, *i.e.*, the old misinterpretation of Marxism by the Mensheviks (*rejected* by Kautsky in 1905!) are now once again being rehashed by our theoretician. We must deal with this question, however tedious it may be for Russian Marxists.

The Russian revolution is a bourgeois revolution, said all the Marxists of Russia before 1905. The Mensheviks, substituting liberalism for Marxism, drew the conclusion from this that, hence, the proletariat must not go beyond what was acceptable to the bourgeoisie and must pursue a policy of compromise with it. The Bolsheviks said that this was a bourgeois-liberal theory. The bourgeoisie, they said, was trying to bring about the reform of

the state on bourgeois, *reformist*, not revolutionary lines, while preserving the monarchy, landlordism, etc., as far as possible. The proletariat must carry through the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the end, not allowing itself to be "bound" by the reformism of the bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks formulated the relation of *class* forces in the bourgeois revolution as follows: the proletariat, joining to itself the peasantry, will neutralize the liberal bourgeoisie and utterly destroy the monarchy, mediaevalism and landlordism.

The alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry *in general* reveals the bourgeois character of the revolution, for the peasantry in general are small producers who stand on the basis of commodity production. Further, the Bolsheviks then added, the proletariat will join to itself *the entire semi-proletariat* (all the toilers and exploited), will neutralize the middle peasantry and *overthrow* the bourgeoisie; this will be a Socialist revolution, as distinct from a bourgeois-democratic revolution (see my pamphlet *Two Tactics*, published in 1905 and reprinted in *Twelve Years*, St. Petersburg, 1907).

Kautsky took an indirect part in this controversy in 1905, when, in reply to an inquiry by the then Menshevik Plekhanov, he expressed an opinion that was essentially *opposed* to Plekhanov, which provoked particular ridicule in the Bolshevik press at the time. But now Kautsky does not say *a single word* about the controversies of that time (for fear of being exposed by his own statements!), and thereby deprives the German reader of all opportunity of understanding the essence of the matter. Mr. Kautsky *could not* very well tell the German workers in 1918 that in 1905 he had been in favour of an alliance of the workers with the peasants and not with the liberal bourgeoisie, and on what conditions he had advocated this alliance, and what program he had proposed for it.

Retreating from his old position, Kautsky, under the guise of an "economic analysis," and talking proudly about "historical materialism," now advocates the subordination of the workers to the bourgeoisie, and, with the aid of quotations from the Menshevik Maslov,* chews the cud of the old liberal views of the Mensheviks; quotations are further used to prove the brand new idea of the backwardness of Russia, but the deduction drawn from this new idea is the old one that in a bourgeois revolution one must not go further than the bourgeoisie! And this in spite of all that Marx and Engels said when comparing the bourgeois revolution of 1789-93 in France with the bourgeois revolution of 1848 in Germany!

Before passing to the chief "argument" and the main content of Kautsky's "economic analysis," let us remark that Kautsky's very first sentences reveal a curious confusion, or superficiality, of thought.

"Agriculture, and precisely small peasant farming," our "theoretician" informs us, "to this day represents the economic foundation of Russia.

---

* *P. P. Maslov*—Menshevik author of *The Agrarian Problem in Russia*.—*Ed.*

About four-fifths, perhaps even five-sixths, of the population live by it." (P. 45.) First of all, my dear theoretician, have you considered how many exploiters there may be among this mass of small producers? Certainly not more than one-tenth of the total, and in the towns still less, for there large-scale production is more highly developed. Take even an incredibly high figure; assume that one-fifth of the small producers are exploiters who are deprived of the franchise. Even then you will find that the 66 per cent of the votes held by the Bolsheviks at the Fifth Congress of Soviets represented the *majority of the population*. To this it must be added that there was always a considerable section of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries which was in favour of Soviet government—in principle *all* the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were in favour of Soviet government, and when a section of them, in July 1918, started an adventurist revolt, two new parties split away from their old party, *viz.*, the so-called "Narodnik-Communists" and the "Revolutionary Communists" (of the prominent Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who had been nominated for important posts in the government by the old party, to the first-mentioned belonged Zaks, for instance, and to the second Kolegayev). Hence, Kautsky has himself—inadvertently!—refuted the ridiculous fable that the Bolsheviks only have the support of a minority of the population.

Secondly, my dear theoretician, have you considered the fact that the small peasant producer *inevitably* vacillates between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie? This Marxian truth, which has been confirmed by the whole modern history of Europe, Kautsky very conveniently "forgot," for it just demolishes the Menshevik "theory" that he keeps repeating! Had Kautsky not "forgotten" this he could not have denied the need for a proletarian dictatorship in a country in which the small peasant producer predominates.

Let us examine the main content of our theoretician's "economic analysis."

That the Soviet regime is a dictatorship cannot be disputed, says Kautsky. "But is it a dictatorship *of the proletariat*?" (P. 34.)

> "According to the Soviet Constitution, the peasants form the majority of the population entitled to participate in legislation and administration. What is presented to us as a dictatorship *of the proletariat* would be—if carried out consistently, and if, generally speaking, a class could directly exercise a dictatorship, which in reality can only be exercised by a party—a dictatorship *of the peasantry*" (p. 35).

And, highly elated over so profound and clever an argument, our good Kautsky tries to be witty and says: "It would appear, therefore, that the most painless realization of Socialism is best secured when it is put in the hands of the peasants" (p. 35).

In the greatest detail, and citing extremely learned quotations from the semi-liberal Maslov, our theoretician advances the new idea that the

peasants are interested in high grain prices, in low wages for the urban workers, etc., etc. Incidentally, the more tedious the enunciation of these new ideas is, the less attention our author pays to the really new phenomena of the post-war period—such as, for example, that the peasants demand for their grain, not money, but goods, and that they have not enough agricultural implements, which cannot be obtained in sufficient quantities for any amount of money. But of this more anon.

Thus, Kautsky charges the Bolsheviks, the party of the proletariat, with having surrendered the dictatorship, the work of realizing Socialism, to the petty-bourgeois peasantry. Excellent, Mr. Kautsky! But what, in your enlightened opinion, should have been the attitude of the proletarian party towards the petty-bourgeois peasantry?

Our theoretician preferred to say nothing on this score—evidently bearing in mind the proverb: "Speech is silver, silence is golden." But he gives himself away by the following argument:

> "Originally, the peasants' Soviets were organizations of the *peasantry* in general. Now the Soviet Republic proclaims that the Soviets are organizations of the proletarians and the *poor* peasants. The well-to-do peasants are deprived of the suffrage in the elections to the Soviets. The poor peasant is here recognized to be a permanent and mass product of the Socialist agrarian reform under the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.'" (P. 48.)

What deadly irony! It is the kind that may be heard in Russia from the lips of any bourgeois: they all jeer and gloat over the fact that the Soviet Republic openly admits the existence of poor peasants. They laugh at Socialism. That is their right. But a "Socialist" who jeers at the fact that after four years of a most ruinous war there should be (and will be for a long time) poor peasants in Russia—such a "Socialist" could only have been born at a time of wholesale renegacy.

Listen further:

> "The Soviet Republic interferes in the relations between the rich and poor peasants, but not by re-distributing the land. In order to relieve the bread shortage in the towns, detachments of armed workers were sent into the countryside to confiscate the rich peasants' surplus stocks of grain. Part of that stock was distributed among the urban population, another among the poorer peasants" (p. 48).

Of course, Kautsky, the Socialist and Marxist, is profoundly indignant at the idea that such a measure should be extended beyond the environs of the large towns (we have put it into force all over the country). With the matchless, incomparable and admirable coolness (or pig-headedness) of a philistine, Kautsky, the Socialist and Marxist, didactically says: "It (the expropriation of the well-to-do peasants) introduces a new element of unrest and civil war into the process of production" (civil war introduced into the "process of production"—that is something superna-

tural!) "which stands in urgent need of tranquility and security for its recovery" (p. 49).

Oh, yes, of course, it is quite proper for Kautsky, the Marxist and Socialist, to sigh and shed tears over the subject of tranquility and security for the exploiters and grain profiteers who hoard their surplus stocks, sabotage the grain monopoly law, and reduce the urban population to famine. "We are all Socialists and Marxists and Internationalists," the Kautskys, Heinrich Webers (Vienna), Longuets (Paris), MacDonalds (London), etc., sing in chorus; "we are all in favour of a working-class revolution. Only . . . only we would like a revolution that does not disturb the tranquility and security of the grain profiteers. And we camouflage this foul subserviency to the capitalists by a 'Marxist' reference to the 'process of production.'. . ." If this is Marxism, what is servility to the bourgeoisie?

Just see what our theoretician arrives at. He accuses the Bolsheviks of palming off the dictatorship of the peasantry as the dictatorship of the proletariat. But at the same time he accuses us of introducing civil war into the rural districts (which we think is to our *credit*), of despatching armed detachments of workers into the countryside, who publicly proclaim that they are exercising the "dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry," assist the latter and confiscate from the profiteers and the rich peasants the surplus stocks of grain which they are hoarding in contravention of the grain monopoly law.

On the one hand our Marxist theoretician stands for pure democracy, for the subordination of the revolutionary class, the leader of the toilers and exploited, to the majority of the population (including, therefore, the exploiters). On the other hand, as an argument *against* us, he explains that the revolution must inevitably bear a bourgeois character—bourgeois, because the peasantry as a whole stands on the basis of bourgeois social relations—and at the same time he pretends to uphold the proletarian, class, Marxian view.

Instead of an "economic analysis" we have a first-class hodge-podge and muddle. Instead of Marxism we have fragments of liberal doctrines and the preaching of servility to the bourgeoisie and the kulaks.

The question which Kautsky has so confused was fully explained by the Bolsheviks as far back as 1905. Yes, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution *so long* as we march with the peasantry *as a whole*. This has been as clear as clear can be to us; we have said it hundreds and thousands of times since 1905, and we have never attempted to skip this necessary stage of the historical process or abolish it by decrees. Kautsky's efforts to "expose" us on this point merely expose his own confusion of mind and his fear to recall what he wrote in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade.

But beginning with *April* 1917, long before the October Revolution, that is, long before we assumed power, we publicly declared and explained to the people: the revolution cannot now stop at this stage,

for the country has marched forward, capitalism has advanced, ruin has reached unprecedented dimensions, which (whether one likes it or not) will *demand* steps forward, *to Socialism* For there is no other way of advancing, of saving the country which is exhausted by war, and of *alleviating* the sufferings of the toilers and exploited

Things have turned out just as we said they would The course taken by the revolution has confirmed the correctness of our reasoning *First*, with the "whole" of the peasantry against the monarchy, against the landlords, against the mediaeval regime (and to that extent, the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois democratic) *Then*, with the poorest peasants, with the semi proletarians, with all the exploited, *against capitalism*, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a *Socialist* one To attempt to raise an artificial Chinese Wall between the first and second, to separate them by *anything else than* the degree of preparedness of the proletariat and the degree of its unity with the poor peasants, means monstrously to distort Marxism, to vulgarize it, to substitute liberalism in its place It means smuggling in a reactionary defence of the bourgeoisie as compared with the Socialist proletariat by means of quasi scientific references to the progressive character of the bourgeoisie as compared with mediaevalism

Incidentally, the Soviets represent an immeasurably higher form and type of democracy just because, by uniting and drawing *the masses of workers and peasants* into political life, they serve as a most sensitive barometer, the one closest to the "people" (in the sense in which Marx, in 1871, spoke of a real people's revolution), of the growth and development of the political, class maturity of the masses The Soviet Constitution was not drawn up according to some "plan", it was not drawn up in a study, and was not foisted on the working people by bourgeois lawyers No, this constitution *grew up* in the course of the development of the *class struggle* in proportion as *class antagonisms* matured The very facts which Kautsky himself has to admit prove this

At first, the Soviets embraced the peasantry as a whole It was owing to the immaturity, the backwardness, the ignorance precisely of the poor peasants, that the leadership passed into the hands of the kulaks, the rich, the capitalists, the petty bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois intellectuals That was the period of the domination of the petty bourgeoisie, of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries (only fools or renegades like Kautsky could regard either of these as Socialists) The petty bourgeoisie inevitably and unavoidably vacillated between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (Kerensky, Kornilov, Savinkov) and the dictatorship of the proletariat, for owing to the very nature of its economic position, the petty bourgeoisie is incapable of doing anything independently By the way, Kautsky completely renounces Marxism by confining himself in his analysis of the Russian revolution, to the legal and formal concept of "democracy," which serves the bourgeoisie as a screen to conceal

its domination over the masses and as a means of deceiving them, and by *forgetting* that in practice "democracy" sometimes stands for *the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*, sometimes for the impotent reformism of the petty bourgeoisie which submits to that dictatorship, and so on. According to Kautsky, in a capitalist country there were bourgeois parties and there was a proletarian party (the Bolsheviks), which led the majority, the mass of the proletariat, but *there were no* petty-bourgeois parties! The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had no *class roots,* no petty-bourgeois roots!

The vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie, of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, helped to enlighten the masses and to repel the overwhelming majority of them, all the "rank and file," all the proletarians and semi-proletarians, from such "leaders."

The Bolsheviks secured predominance in the Soviets (in Petrograd and Moscow by October 1917); the split among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks became more pronounced.

The victorious Bolshevik revolution meant the end of vacillation, it meant the complete destruction of the monarchy and of landlordism (which had *not* been destroyed before the October Revolution). We carried the *bourgeois* revolution *to its conclusion.* The peasantry supported us *as a whole.* Its antagonism to the Socialist proletariat could not reveal itself all at once. The Soviets embraced the peasantry *in general.* The class divisions among the peasantry had not yet matured, had not yet come into the open.

That process took place in the summer and autumn of 1918. The Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary mutiny roused the kulaks. A wave of kulak revolts swept over Russia. The poor peasantry learned, not from books or newspapers, *but from life itself,* that its interests were irreconcilably antagonistic to those of the kulaks, the rich, the rural bourgeoisie. Like every other petty-bourgeois party, the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries" reflected the vacillation of the masses, and precisely in the summer of 1918 they split: one section joined forces with the Czechoslovaks (the insurrection in Moscow, when Proshyan, having seized the telegraph office—for one hour!—announced to Russia that the Bolsheviks had been overthrown; then the treachery of Muravyov, Commander-in-Chief of the army that was fighting the Czechoslovaks, etc.), while another section, that mentioned above, remained with the Bolsheviks.

The growing acuteness of the food shortage in the towns lent increasing urgency to the question of the grain monopoly (this Kautsky the theoretician completely "forgot" about in his economic analysis, which is a mere repetition of platitudes gleaned from Maslov's writings of ten years ago!).

The old landlord and bourgeois, and even democratic-republican, state had sent to the rural districts armed detachments which were practically at the beck and call of the bourgeoisie. Mr. Kautsky does not know

this! He does not regard that as the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie"—God forbid! That is "pure democracy," especially if endorsed by a bourgeois parliament! Nor has Kautsky "heard" that, in the summer and autumn of 1917, Avksentyev and S. Maslov,* in company with Kerensky, Tsereteli and other Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, arrested members of the Land Committees; he does not say a word about that!

The whole point is that a bourgeois state which is exercising the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through a democratic republic cannot confess to the people that it is serving the bourgeoisie, it cannot tell the truth, and is compelled to play the hypocrite.

But a state of the Paris Commune type, a Soviet state, openly and frankly tells the people the *truth* and declares that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry; and by this truth it wins over scores and scores of millions of new citizens who are kept down under any democratic republic, but who are drawn by the Soviets into political life, into *democracy*, into the administration of the state. The Soviet Republic sends into the rural districts detachments of armed workers, primarily the most advanced, from the capitals. These workers carry Socialism into the countryside, win over the poor, organize and enlighten them, and help them to *suppress the resistance of the bourgeoisie.*

All who are familiar with affairs and have been in the rural districts, declare that it is only now, in the summer and autumn of 1918, that the rural districts are passing through the "October" (*i.e.*, proletarian) "revolution." A turning point has been reached. The wave of kulak revolts is giving way to a rising movement among the poor, to the growth of the "Committees of Poor Peasants." In the army, the number of working-class commissars, working-class officers and working class commanders of divisions and armies is increasing. And at the very time that Kautsky, frightened by the July (1918) crisis and the lamentations of the bourgeoisie, was running after the latter like a "cockerel," and writing a pamphlet breathing the conviction that the Bolsheviks were on the eve of being overthrown by the peasantry, at the very time that Kautsky regarded the secession of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries as a "contraction" (p. 37) of the circle of those who supported the Bolsheviks—at that very time the *real* circle of supporters of Bolshevism *was expanding enormously,* because millions and millions of the village poor were freeing themselves from the tutelage and influence of the kulaks and village bourgeoisie and were awakening to *independent* political life

We have lost hundreds of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, spineless peasant intellectuals and kulaks, but we have gained millions of representatives of the poor.**

---

* *S. L. Maslov*—Minister of Agriculture in the bourgeois Provisional Government.—*Ed.*

** At the Sixth Congress of Soviets (November 7-9, 1918), there were 967 voting delegates, 950 of whom were Bolsheviks, and 351 non voting delegates, of

A year after the proletarian revolution in the capitals, and under its influence and with its assistance, the proletarian revolution began in the remote rural districts, and this has finally consolidated the power of the Soviets and Bolshevism, and has finally proved that there is no force within the country that can withstand it.

Having completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution in conjunction with the peasantry in general, the Russian proletariat passed on definitely to the Socialist revolution when it succeeded in splitting the rural population, in winning over the rural proletarians and semi-proletarians, and in uniting them against the kulaks and the bourgeoisie, including the peasant bourgeoisie.

If the Bolshevik proletariat in the capitals and large industrial centres had not been able to rally the village poor around itself against the rich peasants, this would indeed have proved that Russia was "unripe" for the Socialist revolution. The peasantry would then have remained an "integral whole," *i.e.*, it would have remained under the economic, political, and moral leadership of the kulaks, of the rich, of the bourgeoisie, and the revolution would not have passed beyond the limits of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. (But, let it be said in parenthesis, even this would not have proved that the proletariat should not have assumed power, for it is the proletariat alone that has really carried the bourgeois-democratic revolution to its conclusion, it is the proletariat alone that has done something really important to bring nearer the world proletarian revolution, and the proletariat alone that has created the Soviet state, which, after the Paris Commune, is the second step towards the Socialist state.)

On the other hand, if the Bolshevik proletariat had tried at once, in October-November 1917, without waiting for the class differentiation in the rural districts, without being able to *prepare* for it and bring it about, to "decree" a civil war or the "introduction of Socialism" in the rural districts, had tried to do without a temporary bloc (alliance) with the peasants in general, without making a number of concessions to the middle peasants, etc., that would have been a Blanquist distortion of Marxism, an attempt of the minority to impose its will upon the majority; it would have been a theoretical absurdity, revealing a failure to understand that a general peasant revolution is *still* a bourgeois revolution, and that *without a series of transitions, of transitional stages*, it cannot be transformed into a Socialist revolution in a backward country.

Kautsky has confused *everything* in this very important theoretical and political problem, and has, in practice, proved to be nothing but a servant of the bourgeoisie, howling against the dictatorship of the proletariat.

* * *

---

whom 335 were Bolsheviks, *i.e.*, 97 per cent of the total number of delegates were Bolsheviks.

Kautsky has introduced a similar, if not greater confusion into another very interesting and important question, namely was the *legislative* activity of the Soviet Republic in the sphere of agrarian reformation—that most difficult and yet most important of Socialist reformations—based on sound principles and properly carried out? We should be grateful beyond words to any West European Marxist who, after studying at least the most important documents, gave a *criticism* of our policy, because he would thereby help us immensely, and would also help the revolution that is maturing throughout the world But instead of criticism Kautsky produces an incredible theoretical confusion, which converts Marxism into liberalism and which, in practice, is a series of idle, malicious, vulgar sallies against the Bolsheviks Let the reader judge for himself

"Large landlordism was made untenable by the revolution That was at once clear The transference of the large estates to the peasant population became inevitable " (That is not true, Mr Kautsky You substitute what is "*clear*" to you for the attitude of the different *classes* towards the question The history of the revolution has shown that the coalition government of the bourgeois and the petty bourgeois, the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries, pursued a policy of preserving large landlordism This was proved particularly by S Maslov s bill and by the arrest of the members of the Land Committees Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, the "peasant population" would not have vanquished the landlords, who had joined forces with the capitalists)

"But as to the forms in which it was to be carried out, there was no unity Several solutions were conceivable " (Kautsky is most of all concerned about the "unity" of the "Socialists," no matter who called themselves by that name He forgets that the principal classes in capitalist society are bound to arrive at different solutions) " From the Socialist point of view, the most rational solution would have been to transform the large estates into state property and to allow the peasants who hitherto had been employed on them as wage labourers to cultivate them in the form of co operative societies But such a solution presupposes the existence of a type of agricultural labourer that does not exist in Russia Another solution would have been to transform the large estates into state property and to divide them up into small plots to be rented out to peasants who owned little land Had that been done, something socialistic would also have been achieved "

As usual, Kautsky confines himself to the celebrated on the one hand it cannot but be admitted, and on the other hand it must be confessed He places different solutions *side by side* without a thought—the only realistic and Marxian thought—as to what must be the *transitional stages* from capitalism to Communism in such and such *specific conditions* There are agricultural labourers in Russia, but not many, and Kautsky did not touch on the question which the Soviet government *did raise* of the method of transition to a communal and co operative form of land

cultivation. The most curious thing, however, is that Kautsky claims to see "something socialistic" in the renting out of small plots of land. In reality, this is a *petty-bourgeois* slogan, and there is *nothing* "socialistic" in it. If the "state" that rents out the land *is not* a state of the Paris Commune type, but a parliamentary bourgeois republic (and such is Kautsky's constant assumption) the renting of land in small plots is a typical *liberal reform.*

That the Soviet power has abolished *all* private property in land, of that Kautsky says nothing. Worse than that: he resorts to an incredible subterfuge and quotes the decrees of the Soviet government in such a way as to omit the most essential.

After stating that "small production strives for complete private ownership of the means of production," and the Constituent Assembly would have been the "only authority" capable of preventing the dividing up of the land (an assertion which will evoke laughter in Russia, where everybody knows that the Soviets *alone* are recognized as authoritative by the workers and peasants, while the Constituent Assembly has become the slogan of the Czechoslovaks and the landlords), Kautsky continues:

> "One of the first decrees of the Soviet government declared that 1) the rights of the landlords to ownership of the land are abolished forthwith without compensation. 2) The landed estates, as well as all crown, monasterial and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, farm buildings and everything pertaining thereto, shall be placed at the disposal of the rural area Land Committees and the district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the settlement of the land question by the Constituent Assembly."

Having quoted *only these two clauses*, Kautsky concludes:

> "The reference to the Constituent Assembly has remained a dead letter. In point of fact, the peasants in the separate volosts could do as they pleased with the land" (p. 47).

Here you have an example of Kautsky's "criticism"! Here you have a "scientific" work which is more like a fraud. The German reader is induced to believe that the Bolsheviks capitulated before the peasantry on the question of private property in land! That the Bolsheviks permitted the peasants to act locally ("in the separate volosts") in whatever way they pleased!

But as a matter of fact, the decree that Kautsky quotes—the first to be promulgated, on October 26, 1917 (old style)—consists not of two, but of five clauses, *plus* eight clauses of the "Mandate,"* which, it was expressly stated, "shall serve as a guide."

---

* "*Mandate*"—the reference here is to the Mandate of the peasantry to the agricultural committees which constitutes a component part of the Decree on Land adopted

Clause 3 of the decree states that the property is transferred "*to the people*," and that "inventories of all property confiscated" shall be drawn up and the property "protected in a strict revolutionary way" And the Mandate declares that "private ownership of land is hereby abolished," that "lands with highly developed forms of cultivation *shall not be divided up*," that "all livestock and farm implements of the confiscated estates shall be reserved for the exclusive use of the state or the communities, depending on their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid therefore," and that "all land shall become part of the national land fund"

Further, simultaneously with the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (January 5, 1918), the Third Congress of Soviets adopted the "*Declaration of Rights* of the Toiling and Exploited People," which now forms part of the Fundamental Law of the Soviet Republic Article 2, paragraph 1 of this Declaration states that "private ownership of land is hereby abolished," and that "model estates and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property"

Hence, the reference to the Constituent Assembly did *not* remain a dead letter, because another national representative body, immeasurably more authoritative in the eyes of the peasants, took upon itself the solution of the agrarian problem

Again, on February 6 [19], 1918, the Land Socialization Act was promulgated, which once again confirmed the abolition of all private ownership of land and placed the land and *all private* stock and implements at the disposal of the Soviet authorities *under the control of the federal Soviet government* Among the duties connected with the disposal of the land, the law prescribed

> "The development of collective farming as more advantageous in respect to economy of labour and produce, at the expense of individual farming, with a view to the transition to Socialist farming" (Article 11, paragraph *e*)

The same law, in establishing the principle of *equal* land tenure, replied to the fundamental question Who has a right to the use of the land?' in the following manner

> "Article 20 Plots of land surface for public and private needs within the borders of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic may be used A For cultural and educational purposes 1) by the state as represented by the organs of Soviet government (federal, regional, provincial uyezd, volost and village), and 2) by public bodies (under the control, and with the consent, of the local Soviet authorities), B For agricultural purposes, 3) by agricultural communes, 4) by

by the Second All Russian Congress of Soviets on October 26 [November 8] 1917 For the full text of the Mandate see this volume pp 236 38 —*Ed*

agricultural co-operative associations, 5) by village communities, 6) by individual families and persons. . . ."

The reader will perceive that Kautsky has completely distorted the facts, and has given the German reader an absolutely false view of the agrarian policy and agrarian legislation of the proletarian state in Russia.

Kautsky did not even formulate the theoretically important fundamental questions.

These questions are:

1) Equal land tenure and

2) Nationalization of the land—the relation of these two measures to Socialism in general, and to the transition from capitalism to Communism in particular.

3) Social cultivation of the soil as a transition stage from small, parcellized farming to large-scale social farming; does the manner in which this question is dealt with in Soviet legislation meet the requirements of Socialism?

On the first question it is necessary, first of all, to establish the following two fundamental facts: a) in weighing up the experience of 1905 (I may refer, for instance, to my work on the agrarian problem in the first Russian revolution), the Bolsheviks pointed to the democratically progressive, the democratically revolutionary value of the slogan "equal land tenure"; and in 1917, *before* the October Revolution, they spoke of this quite definitely; b) when adopting the Land Socialization Act—the "spirit" of which is equal land tenure—the Bolsheviks most explicitly and definitely declared: this is not our idea; we do not agree with this slogan; but we think it our duty to pass it because it is demanded by the overwhelming majority of the peasants. And ideas and demands of the majority of the toilers are things that the toilers must *discard of their own accord*; such demands cannot be "abolished" or "skipped over." We Bolsheviks will *help* the peasantry to discard petty-bourgeois demands, to *pass* from them as quickly and as painlessly as possible to Socialist demands.

A Marxist theoretician who wanted to help the working-class revolution by his scientific analysis should have answered the questions: first, is it true that the idea of equal land tenure is of democratic-revolutionary value in that it carries the *bourgeois* democratic revolution to its conclusion? Secondly, did the Bolsheviks act rightly in helping to pass by their votes (and in most loyally observing) the petty-bourgeois equal tenure law?

Kautsky failed even to *perceive* what, theoretically, was the crux of the question!

Kautsky will never be able to refute the view that equal land tenure has a progressive and revolutionary value in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. That revolution cannot go beyond this. By reaching its limit, it *all the more clearly, rapidly* and *easily* reveals to the masses

the *inadequacy* of bourgeois democratic solutions and the necessity of proceeding beyond their limits, of passing on to *Socialism*

Having overthrown tsarism and the landlords, the peasantry dreams of equal land tenure, and no power on earth could have hindered the peasantry, once they had been freed both from the landlords and from the *bourgeois* parliamentary republican state The proletarians said to the peasants We will help you to reach "ideal" capitalism, for equal land tenure is the idealization of capitalism from the point of view of the small producer At the same time we will prove to you its inadequacy and the necessity of passing to the social cultivation of the land

It would be interesting to see Kautsky attempt to prove that *this* leadership of the peasant struggle by the proletariat was wrong

But Kautsky preferred to evade the question altogether

Next, Kautsky deliberately deceived his German readers by withholding from them the fact that *in its* land *law* the Soviet government gave *direct* preference to communes and co operative associations by putting them in the forefront

With the peasantry to the end of the bourgeois democratic revolution, and with the poorest, the proletarian and semi proletarian section of the peasantry, forward to the Socialist revolution! That has been the policy of the Bolsheviks, and it is the only Marxian policy

But Kautsky is all muddled up and cannot formulate a single question! On the one hand, he *dare not* say that the proletarians should have parted company with the peasantry over the question of equal land tenure, for he realizes that it would have been absurd (and, moreover, in 1905, when he was not yet a renegade, he himself had clearly and explicitly advocated an alliance between the workers and peasants as a condition for the victory of the revolution) On the other hand, he sympathetically quotes the liberal platitudes of the Menshevik Maslov, who "proves" that petty bourgeois equal land tenure is utopian and reactionary *from the point of view of Socialism*, but fails to point out the progressive and revolutionary character of the *petty bourgeois struggle for equality and equal tenure from the point of view of the bourgeois democratic revolution*

Kautsky is in a hopeless muddle note that he (in 1918) *insists* on the *bourgeois* character of the Russian revolution He (in 1918) peremptorily says don't go beyond these limits! Yet this very same Kautsky sees "something *socialistic*" (for a *bourgeois* revolution) in the *petty bourgeois* reform of renting out small plots of land to the *poor* peasants (which is an approximation to equal land tenure)!!

Let them understand this who can!

In addition to all this, Kautsky displays a philistine inability to take into account the real policy of a definite party He quotes the *phrases* of the Menshevik Maslov and *refuses to see the real* policy the Menshevik Party pursued in 1917, when, in "coalition" with the landlords and Cadets, they advocated what was virtually a *liberal agrarian reform and compromise with*

the landlords (proof: the arrest of the members of the Land Committees and S. Maslov's Land Bill).

Kautsky failed to realize that P. Maslov's phrases about the reactionary and utopian character of petty-bourgeois equality are really a screen to conceal the Menshevik policy of *compromise* between the peasants and the landlords (*i.e.*, of helping the landlords to dupe the peasants), instead of the *revolutionary* overthrow of the landlords by the peasants.

What a "Marxist" Kautsky is!

It was the Bolsheviks who strictly differentiated between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the Socialist revolution: by carrying the former to its end, they opened the way for the transition to the latter. This was the only policy that was revolutionary and Marxian.

It is useless for Kautsky to repeat the feeble liberal witticism: "Never yet have the small peasants anywhere adopted collective farming under the influence of theoretical convictions." (P. 50.)

How smart!

But never as yet and nowhere have the small peasants of any large country been under the influence of a proletarian state!

Never as yet and nowhere have the small peasants anywhere engaged in an open class struggle reaching the extent of a civil war between the poor peasants and the rich peasants, *with* propagandist, political, economic and military support given to the poor by a proletarian state.

Never as yet and nowhere have the profiteers and the rich amassed such wealth out of war, while the masses of the peasantry have been so utterly ruined.

Kautsky just reiterates old stuff, he just chews the old cud, afraid even to ponder over the new tasks of the proletarian dictatorship.

But what, dear Kautsky, if the peasants *lack* implements for small-scale farming and the proletarian state *helps* them to obtain machines for the collective cultivation of the soil—is that a "theoretical conviction?"

We shall now pass to the question of the nationalization of the land. Our Narodniks, including all the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, deny that the measure we have adopted is the nationalization of the land. They are wrong in theory. In so far as we remain within the framework of commodity production and capitalism, the abolition of private property in land is the nationalization of the land. The term "socialization" merely expresses a tendency, a desire, the preparation for the transition to Socialism.

What should be the attitude of Marxists towards the nationalization of the land?

Here, too, Kautsky fails even to formulate the theoretical question, or, which is still worse, he deliberately evades it; although one knows from Russian literature that Kautsky is aware of the old controversies among the Russian Marxists on the question of nationalization, municipalization (*i.e.*, the transfer of the large estates to the local authorities), or division of the land.

Kautsky's assertion that to transfer the large estates to the state and rent them out in small plots to peasants with little land would be achieving "something socialistic" is a downright mockery of Marxism We have already shown that there is nothing socialistic about it But that is not all, it would not even be carrying the *bourgeois democratic* revolution to its conclusion

Kautsky's great misfortune is that he placed his trust in the Mensheviks Hence the curious position that while insisting on the bourgeois character of our revolution and reproaching the Bolsheviks for taking it into their heads to proceed to Socialism, he *himself* proposes a liberal reform under the guise of Socialism, *without carrying this reform* to the point of completely clearing away all the survivals of mediaevalism in agrarian relationships! The arguments of Kautsky, as of his Menshevik advisers, amount to a defence of the liberal bourgeoisie, who fear revolution, instead of a defence of consistent bourgeois democratic revolution

Indeed, why should only the large estates, and not all the land, be transformed into state property? The liberal bourgeoisie thereby strives for the maximum preservation of the old conditions (*i e*, the least consistency in revolution) and the maximum facility for a reversion to the old conditions The radical bourgeoisie, *i e*, the bourgeoisie that wants to carry the bourgeois *revolution to its conclusion, demands the nationalization of the land*

Kautsky, who in the dim and distant past, some twenty years ago, wrote an excellent Marxian work on the agrarian question, cannot but know that Marx declared that land nationalization is in fact a *consistent* slogan of the *bourgeoisie* Kautsky cannot but be aware of Marx's controversy with Rodbertus, and Marx's remarkable passages in his *Theories of Surplus Value* where the revolutionary significance—in the bourgeois democratic sense—of land nationalization is explained with particular clarity

The Menshevik P Maslov, whom Kautsky, unfortunately for himself, chose as an adviser, denied that the Russian peasants would agree to the nationalization of all the land (including the peasants' lands) To a certain extent, this view of Maslov's could be connected with his "original" theory (which merely parrots the bourgeois critics of Marx) *viz*, his repudiation of absolute rent and his recognition of the "law' (or "fact," as Maslov expressed it) of the "diminishing fertility of the soil"

In point of fact, however, even the Revolution of 1905 revealed that the overwhelming majority of the peasants in Russia, members of village communities as well as individual peasant proprietors, were in favour of the nationalization of all the land The Revolution of 1917 confirmed this, and after the assumption of power by the proletariat this was done The Bolsheviks remained loyal to Marxism and never tried (in spite of Kautsky, who, without a shadow of evidence, accuses us of doing so) to "skip" the bourgeois democratic revolution The Bolsheviks, first of all, helped the most rad

ical, most revolutionary of the bourgeois-democratic ideologists of the peasantry, those who stood closest to the proletariat, namely, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, to carry out what was in effect the nationalization of the land. On October 26, 1917, *i.e.*, on the very first day of the proletarian, Socialist revolution, private ownership of land was abolished in Russia.

This laid the foundation, the most perfect from the point of view of the development of capitalism (Kautsky cannot deny this without breaking with Marx), and at the same time created an agrarian system which is the *most flexible* from the point of view of the transition to Socialism. From the bourgeois-democratic point of view, the revolutionary peasantry in Russia *could go no further: there can be nothing* more "ideal" from this point of view, nothing more "radical" (from this same point of view) than the nationalization of the land and equal land tenure. It was the Bolsheviks, and only the Bolsheviks, who, thanks to the victory of the *proletarian* revolution, helped the peasantry to carry the bourgeois-democratic revolution really to its conclusion. And only in this way did they do the utmost to facilitate and accelerate the transition to the Socialist revolution.

One can judge from this what an incredible muddle Kautsky offers to his readers when he accuses the Bolsheviks of failing to understand the bourgeois character of the revolution, and yet himself betrays such a wide departure from Marxism that he *says nothing* about the nationalization of the land and proposes the least revolutionary (from the bourgeois point of view) liberal agrarian reform as "something socialistic"!

We have now come to the third question formulated above, namely, to what extent the proletarian dictatorship in Russia has taken into account the necessity of passing to the social cultivation of the soil. Here again, Kautsky commits something in the nature of a forgery: he quotes only the "theses" of one Bolshevik which speak of the task of passing to the collective cultivation of the soil! After quoting one of these theses, our "theoretician" triumphantly exclaims:

> "Unfortunately, a task is not fulfilled by the fact that it is called a task. For the time being, collective farming in Russia is doomed to remain on paper only. Never yet have the small peasants anywhere adopted collective farming under the influence of theoretical convictions" (p. 50).

Never yet has a literary swindle been perpetrated anywhere equal to that to which Kautsky has stooped. He quotes "theses," but says nothing about the *law* of the Soviet government. He talks about "theoretical convictions," but says nothing about the proletarian state which holds in its hands the factories and goods! All that Kautsky the Marxist wrote in 1899 in his *Agrarian Question* about the means at the disposal of the proletarian state for bringing about the gradual transition of the small peasants to Socialism has been forgotten by Kautsky the renegade in 1918.

Of course, a few hundred state supported agricultural communes and Soviet farms (i e , large farms cultivated by associations of workers on behalf of the state) are very little, but can Kautsky's ignoring of this fact be called "criticism"?

The nationalization of the land that was carried out in Russia by the proletarian dictatorship has best ensured the carrying of the bourgeois democratic revolution to its conclusion—even in the event of a victory of the counter revolution causing a reversion from land nationalization to land division (I made a special examination of this possibility in my pamphlet on the agrarian program of the Marxists in the 1905 Revolution) In addition, the nationalization of the land has given the proletarian state the maximum opportunity of passing to Socialism in agriculture

To sum up, Kautsky has presented us, as far as theory is concerned, with an incredible theoretical hodge podge which is a complete renunciation of Marxism, and, as far as practice is concerned, with a policy of servility to the bourgeoisie and its reformism A fine criticism indeed!

* * *

Kautsky begins his "economic analysis" of industry with the following magnificent argument

Russia has a large scale capitalist industry Cannot a Socialist system of production be built up on this foundation? "One might have thought so if Socialism meant that the workers of the separate factories and mines appropriated these for themselves in order to carry on production separately at each factory" (p 52) This very day, August 5, as I am writing these lines," Kautsky adds, "a speech is reported from Moscow delivered by Lenin on August 2, in which he is stated to have declared 'The workers are holding the factories firmly in their hands, and the peasants will not return the land to the landlords ' Hitherto, the slogan the factories to the workers, and the land to the peasants—has been an anarcho syndicalist slogan, not a Social Democratic one" (pp 52 53)

I have quoted this passage in full in order that the Russian workers, who formerly respected Kautsky, and quite rightly, may see for themselves the methods employed by this deserter to the bourgeois camp

Just think on August 5, when numerous decrees on the nationalization of factories in Russia had been issued—and not a single factory had been "appropriated' by the workers, but had *all* been converted into the property of the Republic—on August 5, Kautsky, on the strength of an obviously dishonest interpretation of one sentence in my speech, tries to make the German readers believe that in Russia the factories are being handed over to individual groups of workers! And after that Kautsky at great length, chews the cud about its being wrong to hand over single factories to the workers!

This is not criticism, it is the trick of a lackey of the bourgeoisie, whom the capitalists have hired to libel the workers revolution

The factories must be handed over to the state, or to the municipalities, or the consumers' co-operative societies, says Kautsky over and over again, and finally adds:

"This is what they are now trying to do in Russia. . . ." Now!! What does that mean? In August? Why, could not Kautsky have commissioned his friends Stein, or Axelrod, or any of the other friends of the Russian bourgeoisie to translate at least one of the decrees on the factories?

> "What will come of this we cannot yet tell. At all events, this aspect of the activity of the Soviet Republic is of the greatest interest for us, but it still remains entirely shrouded in darkness. There is no lack of decrees . . . [that is why Kautsky ignores their *content*, or conceals them from his readers!] but there is no reliable information as to the effect of these decrees. Socialist production is impossible without all-round, detailed, reliable and rapidly informing statistics. The Soviet Republic cannot possibly have created such statistics yet. What we learn about its economic activities is highly contradictory and cannot be verified. This, too, is a result of the dictatorship and the suppression of democracy. There is no freedom of the press, or of speech" (p. 53).

This is how history is written! From a "free" press of the capitalists and Dutovites Kautsky, of course, would have received information about factories being handed over to the workers. . . . This "serious savant" who stands above class is really magnificent! About the countless facts which show that the factories are being handed over to the Republic *only*, that they are managed by an organ of the Soviet government the Supreme Council of National Economy, which is constituted mainly of workers elected by the trade unions, Kautsky refuses to say a single word. With the obstinacy of the "man in a muffler,"* he stubbornly keeps repeating one thing: give me peaceful democracy, without civil war, without a dictatorship and with good statistics (the Soviet Republic has created a statistical service in which the best statistical authorities in Russia are employed, but, of course, an ideal system of statistics cannot be created so quickly). In a word, what Kautsky demands is a revolution without revolution, without fierce struggle, without violence. It is equivalent to asking for strikes in which workers and employers do not display furious passion. Try to distinguish the difference between this kind of "Socialist" and a common or garden liberal bureaucrat!

And so, relying upon such "factual material," *i.e.*, deliberately and contemptuously ignoring the innumerable facts, Kautsky "concludes":

> "It is doubtful whether the Russian proletariat has obtained more in the sense of real practical acquisitions, and not of mere

*"*Man in a muffler*"—a narrow-minded, hide-bound conservative who stubbornly persists in shutting his eyes to the actual conditions of life. A character depicted in a story under the same title by A. Chekhov.—*Ed.*

decrees, under the Soviet Republic than it would have obtained under a Constituent Assembly, in which, as in the Soviets, Socialists, although of a different hue, predominated" (p. 58).

A gem, is it not? We would advise Kautsky's admirers to circulate this utterance as widely as possible among the Russian workers, for Kautsky could not have provided better material for gauging the depth of his political degradation. Comrades and workers, Kerensky was also a "Socialist," only of a "different hue"! Kautsky the historian is satisfied with the name, the title which the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks "appropriated" to themselves. Kautsky the historian refuses even to listen to the facts which show that under Kerensky the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries supported the imperialist policy and marauding practices of the bourgeoisie; he is discreetly silent about the fact that the majority in the Constituent Assembly consisted of these very champions of imperialist war and bourgeois dictatorship. And this is called "economic analysis"!

In conclusion let me quote another sample of this "economic analysis".

" . . After an existence of nine months, the Soviet Republic, instead of spreading general well-being, feels itself under the necessity of explaining why there is general distress" (p. 41)

We are accustomed to hear such arguments from the lips of the Cadets. All the flunkeys of the bourgeoisie in Russia argue in this way: Show us, after nine months, your general prosperity!—and this after four years of devastating war, with foreign capital giving all round support to the sabotage and insurrections of the bourgeoisie in Russia. *Actually*, there is absolutely no difference whatever, not a shadow of difference, between Kautsky and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. His suave talk, cloaked in the guise of "Socialism," only repeats what the Kornilovites, the Dutovites and Krasnovites in Russia say bluntly, straightforwardly and without embellishment.

* * *

The above lines were written on November 9, 1918. That same night news was received from Germany announcing the beginning of a victorious revolution, first in Kiel and other northern towns and ports, where the power has passed into the hands of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, then in Berlin, where, too, power has passed into the hands of a Soviet.

The conclusion which still remained to be written to my pamphlet on Kautsky and on the proletarian revolution is now superfluous.

November 10, 1918

APPENDIX I

THESES ON THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY*

APPENDIX II

VANDERVELDE'S NEW BOOK ON THE STATE

It was only after I had read Kautsky's book that I had the opportunity to acquaint myself with Vandervelde's *Socialism Versus the State* (Paris, 1918). A comparison of the two books involuntarily suggests itself. Kautsky is the ideological leader of the Second International (1889-1914), while Vandervelde, in his capacity of President of the International Socialist Bureau, is its official representative. Both represent the complete bankruptcy of the Second International, and both with the dexterity of experienced journalists, "skilfully" conceal this bankruptcy and their own bankruptcy and desertion to the bourgeoisie with Marxian catchwords. One gives us a striking example of what is typical of German opportunism, with its ponderous theoretical and gross falsification of Marxism by trimming it of all that is unacceptable to the bourgeoisie. The other is typical of the Latin—to a certain extent, one may say, of the West European (that is, west of Germany)—species of prevailing opportunism, which is more flexible, less ponderous, and which falsifies Marxism by the same fundamental method, but in a more subtle manner.

Both radically distort both Marx's doctrine of the state and his doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat; Vandervelde deals more with the former subject, Kautsky with the latter. Both obscure the very close and inseparable connection that exists between the two subjects. Both are revolutionaries and Marxists in word, but renegades in practice, who strain every effort to *dissociate themselves* from revolution. Neither of them betrays even a trace of what permeates all the works of Marx and Engels, and of what in fact distinguishes Socialism from a bourgeois caricature of it, namely the elucidation of the tasks of revolution as *distinct* from the tasks

* See in this volume pp. 247-250.—*Ed.*

of reform, the elucidation of revolutionary tactics as distinct from reformist tactics, the elucidation of the role of the proletariat in the *aboli tion* of the system, order or regime of wage-slavery as distinct from the role of the proletariat of the "Great" Powers which shares with the bour geoisie a particle of the latter's imperialist super profits and super booty We will quote a few of Vandervelde's most important arguments in support of this opinion

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde quotes Marx and Engels with great zeal, and like Kautsky, he quotes from Marx and Engels everything *except* what is quite unacceptable to the bourgeoisie and what distinguishes a revolutionary from a reformist He says all you like about the conquest of political power by the proletariat, since practice has long ago confined this within strictly parliamentary limits But *not a single word* has he to say about the fact that after the experience of the Paris Commune, Marx and Engels found it necessary to supplement the, in part, obsolete *Commu nist Manifesto* with an elucidation of the truth that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready made state machine, but must *smash* it Vandervelde, like Kautsky, as if by agreement, ignores what is most essential in the *experience* of the proletarian revolution precisely what dis tinguishes proletarian revolution from bourgeois reform

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde talks about the dictatorship of the prole tariat only in order to dissociate himself from it Kautsky did it by gross falsifications Vandervelde does it in a more subtle way In the section of his book on the subject, Section 4, 'The Conquest of Political Power by the Proletariat," he devotes sub section *b* to the question of the "collective dictatorship of the proletariat," "quotes" Marx and Engels (I repeat omitting all that pertains to the main point, namely, the *smashing* of the old, bourgeois democratic state machine), and concludes

> "In socialist circles, the social revolution is commonly conceived in the following manner a new Commune, this time victorious, and not in one centre, but in all the main centres of the capitalist world
>
> 'A hypothesis, but a hypothesis which has nothing improbable about it at a time when it is becoming evident that the post war period will in many countries see unprecedented class antagonisms and social convulsions
>
> 'But if the failure of the Paris Commune, not to speak of the difficulties of the Russian revolution, proves anything at all, it is that it is impossible to put an end to the capitalist system of society until the proletariat has been sufficiently trained to make proper use of the power the force of circumstances may put into its hands' (p 73)

And absolutely nothing more on the essence of the question!

Such are the leaders and representatives of the Second International! In 1912 they signed the Basle Manifesto, which explicitly speaks of the connection of that very war which broke out in 1914 with a proletarian

revolution, and actually holds it up as a *threat*. And when the war broke out and a revolutionary situation arose, the Kautskys and Vanderveldes began to dissociate themselves from revolution. A revolution of the Paris Commune type, don't you see, is only a not improbable hypothesis! This is quite analogous to Kautsky's argument about the possible role of the Soviets in Europe.

But that is just the way every educated *liberal* argues; he will, no doubt, agree now that a new Commune is "not improbable," that the Soviets have a great role to play, etc. The proletarian revolutionary differs from the liberal in that he, as a theoretician, analyses the new *state* significance of the Commune and the Soviets. Vandervelde, however, *says nothing* about what Marx and Engels said at such length on the subject when analysing the experience of the Paris Commune.

As a practical politician, a Marxist should have made it clear that only traitors to Socialism can now evade the task of explaining the need for a proletarian revolution (of the Commune type, the Soviet type, or perhaps of some other type), of explaining the necessity of preparing for it, of preaching revolution among the masses, of refuting the petty-bourgeois prejudices against it, etc.

But neither Kautsky nor Vandervelde does anything of the sort, because they themselves are traitors to Socialism, who only want to maintain their reputation as Socialists and Marxists among the workers.

Take the theoretical formulation of the question.

The state, even in a democratic republic, is nothing more nor less than a machine for the suppression of one class by another. Kautsky is familiar with this truth, admits it, agrees with it, but—he evades the fundamental question: what class must the proletariat suppress when it establishes the proletarian state, for what reasons, and by what means.

Vandervelde is familiar with, admits, agrees with and quotes this fundamental proposition of Marxism (p. 72 of his book), but—he does not say a single word on the "unpleasant" (for Messieurs the capitalists) subject of the *suppression of the resistance of the exploiters*!

Both Vandervelde and Kautsky have completely evaded this "unpleasant" subject. Therein lies their renegacy.

Like Kautsky, Vandervelde is a past master in the art of substituting eclecticism for dialectics. On the one hand it cannot but be admitted, and on the other hand it must be confessed. On the one hand, the term state may mean "the nation as a whole" (see Littre's dictionary—a learned work, it cannot be denied—and Vandervelde, p. 87); on the other hand, the term state may mean the "government" (*ibid.*). Vandervelde quotes this learned platitude, with approval, *side by side* with quotations from Marx.

> "The Marxian meaning of the word 'state' differs from the ordinary meaning," writes Vandervelde. Hence "misunderstand-

ings" may arise "Marx and Engels regard the state not as the state in the broad sense, not as an organ of guidance, as the representative of the general interests of society (*intérêts généraux de la société*) It is the state as the power, the state as the organ of authority, the state as the instrument of the rule of one class over another" (pp 75 76)

Marx and Engels speak about the abolition of the state only in its second meaning "Too absolute propositions run the risk of being inexact There are many transitional stages between the capitalist state, which is based on the exclusive rule of one class, and the proletarian state, the aim of which is to abolish all classes" (p 156)

There you have an example of Vandervelde's "manner," which is only slightly different from that of Kautsky's, and, in essence, identical with it Dialectics repudiate absolute truths and explain the successive changes of opposites and the significance of crises in history The eclectic does not want propositions that are "too absolute," because he wants to push forward his philistine desire to substitute "*transitional stages*" for revolution

Kautsky and Vandervelde say nothing about the fact that the transitional stage between the state as an organ of the rule of the capitalist class and the state as an organ of the rule of the proletariat is precisely *revolution*, which means *overthrowing* the bourgeoisie and *breaking up*, smashing, *its* state machine

Kautsky and Vandervelde obscure the fact that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie must give way to the dictatorship of *one* class, the proletariat, and that the "transitional stages" of the *revolution* will be followed by the "transitional stages" of the gradual withering away of the proletarian state

Therein lies their political renegacy

Therein, theoretically, philosophically, lies their substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics Dialectics are concrete and revolutionary and distinguish between the "transition" from the dictatorship of one class to the dictatorship of another, and the "transition" from the democratic proletarian state to the non state ("the withering away of the state") To please the bourgeoisie, the eclecticism and sophistry of the Kautskys and Vanderveldes blur all that is concrete and precise in the class struggle and advance the general concept "transition," under which they may hide (as *nine tenths* of the official *Social Democrats* of our time *do hide*) their renunciation of revolution

As an eclectic and sophist, Vandervelde is more skilful and subtle than Kautsky, for the *phrase*, "transition from the state in the narrow sense to the state in the broad sense," can serve as a means of evading all the problems of revolution, all the differences between revolution and reform, and even

the difference between the Marxist and the liberal. For what educated European bourgeois would think of denying, "in general," "transitional stages" in this "general" sense?

Vandervelde writes:

> "I agree with Guesde that it is impossible to socialize the means of production and exchange without the following two conditions having been fulfilled:
>
> "1) The transformation of the present state as the organ of the rule of one class over another into what Menger calls a people's labour state, by the conquest of political power by the proletariat;
>
> "2) Separation of the state as an organ of authority from the state as an organ of guidance, or, to use Saint-Simon's expression, of the government of men from the administration of things" (p. 89).

Vandervelde puts this in italics, laying special emphasis on the importance of these propositions. But this is a sheer eclectical hodge-podge, a complete rupture with Marxism! The so-called "people's labour state" is just a paraphrase of the old "free people's state," which the German Social-Democrats paraded in the 'seventies and which Engels branded as an absurdity. The term "people's labour state" is a phrase worthy of petty-bourgeois democrats (like our Left Socialist-Revolutionaries), a phrase which substitutes *non-class* concepts for class concepts. Vandervelde places the conquest of state power by the *proletariat* (by one *class*) alongside of the "people's" state, and fails to see that the result is a hodge-podge. With Kautsky and his "pure democracy," the result is a similar hodge-podge, and a similar anti-revolutionary, philistine disregard of the tasks of the class revolution, of the class, proletarian dictatorship, of the *class* (proletarian) state.

Further, the government of men will disappear and give way to the administration of things only when the state *in all forms* disappears. By talking about this relatively distant future, Vandervelde overlays, obscures the tasks of *to-morrow*, *viz.*, the *overthrow* of the bourgeoisie.

This trick is also equivalent to subserviency to the liberal bourgeoisie. The liberal is willing to talk about what will happen when it will not be necessary to govern men. Why not indulge in such innocent dreams? But about the proletariat having to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance to its expropriation—of that not a word. The class interests of the bourgeoisie demand it.

Socialism versus the State. This is Vandervelde's bow to the proletariat. It is not difficult to make a bow; every "democratic" politician knows how to make a bow to his electors. And under cover of a "bow," an anti-revolutionary, anti-proletarian meaning is insinuated.

Vandervelde extensively paraphrases Ostrogorsky to show what deceit, violence, corruption, mendacity, hypocrisy and oppression of the

poor is hidden beneath the civilized, polished and perfumed exterior of modern bourgeois democracy. But he draws no conclusion from this. He fails to observe that bourgeois democracy suppresses the toiling and exploited masses, and that *proletarian democracy* will have to *suppress the bourgeoisie*. Kautsky and Vandervelde are blind to this. The class interests of the bourgeoisie, in whose wake these petty-bourgeois traitors to Marxism are floundering, *demand* that this question be evaded, that it be hushed up, or that the necessity of such suppression be directly denied.

Petty-bourgeois Eclecticism *versus* Marxism, Sophistry *versus* Dialectics, Philistine Reformism *versus* Proletarian Revolution—such should have been the title of Vandervelde's book.

Written October-November 1918
Published in book form in 1918

WON AND RECORDED

Only that is firm in a revolution which has been won by the masses of the proletariat. It is only worth while recording what has really been firmly won.

The foundation of the Third, Communist International in Moscow on March 2, 1919, was a record not only of what the Russians have won, not only of the proletarian masses of Russia, but also of the German, Austrian, Hungarian, Finnish, Swiss—in a word, of the international proletarian masses.

And precisely because of this the foundation of the Third, Communist International is built on firm ground.

Only four months ago it would have been impossible yet to say that the Soviet power, the Soviet form of state, is an international acquisition. There was something in it, and moreover something essential, which belonged not only to Russia, but also to all capitalist countries. But it was still impossible to say, until it had been put to the test, what changes, what depth, what importance the further developments of the world revolution would bring.

The German Revolution has provided this test. A foremost capitalist country, after one of the most backward, has in a short period, in the course of some hundred or so days, demonstrated to the whole world not only the same main forces of revolution, not only its same main direction, but also the same main form of the new, proletarian democracy—the Soviets.

At the same time in England, in a victor country, in the country which is richer than any other in colonies, in the country which longer than others had served as, and was reputed to be an example of "social peace," in the oldest capitalist country, we see a wide, irrepressible, intense and powerful growth of Soviets and of new Soviet forms of mass proletarian struggle—the Shop Stewards' Committees.

In America, in the strongest and youngest capitalist country, there is immense sympathy towards the Soviets on the part of the working-class masses.

The ice has been broken.

The Soviets have triumphed throughout the world.

They have triumphed first of all and most of all in that they have won ne sympathy of the proletarian masses. This is the chief thing. No savage-y of the imperialist bourgeoisie, no persecutions and murders of Bolsheviks re strong enough to deprive the masses of this gain. The more the "demo-ratic" bourgeoisie will rage, the firmer will these gains find reflection n the spirit of the proletarian masses, in their moods, in their conscious-ess, in their heroic readiness to struggle.

The ice has been broken.

And it is for this reason that the work of the International Conference f Communists in Moscow which founded the Third International has roceeded so easily, so smoothly, with such calm and firm resolution

We have recorded what has already been won. We have inscribed on aper what has already taken firm hold in the minds of the masses. All new—and what is more—all saw, felt, sensed, each from the experience f his own country, that a new proletarian movement has been set in full wing, unprecedented in the world for its depth and strength, that it could ot be confined within any of the old frameworks, that it could not be held n leash by the past masters of petty politics, nor by the world-schooled, orld skilled Lloyd Georges and Wilsons of Anglo-American "democratic" apitalism, nor by the Hendersons, Renaudels, Brantings and all the ther hard boiled heroes of social-chauvinism.

The new movement is heading towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, making headway despite all hesitations, despite desperate reverses, lespite the incredible and inconceivable "Russian" chaos (if we judge su-perficially as an onlooker), is heading towards *Soviet power* with the tor-ential force of millions and tens of millions of proletarians which is sweep ng everything from its path.

This we have recorded We have reflected in our resolutions theses, reports and speeches what has already been won.

The theory of Marxism, illuminated by the dazzling light of the new, world rich experience of the revolutionary workers, has helped us to under-stand all the laws of what has taken place It will help the proletarians all the world over who are fighting for the overthrow of capitalist wage-slavery to understand more clearly the aims of their struggle, to march more firmly along the path which has already been mapped out, more confident-ly and firmly to achieve victory and to consolidate their victory.

The foundation of the Third, Communist International is the forerunner of the International Republic of Soviets, of the International victory of Communism.

March 5, 1919

Pravda No 51,
March 6, 1919

ON THE PARTY PROGRAM

REPORT DELIVERED AT THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS), MARCH 19, 1919

[*Applause.*] Comrades, according to the division of subjects agreed on between Bukharin and myself, there devolves on me the task of explaining the point of view of the commission on a number of concrete and most disputable points, or points which interest the Party most at the present time.

I shall begin by dealing briefly with the points which Bukharin touched on at the end of his report as points of dispute among us in the commission. The first relates to the manner of drawing up the preamble to the program. In my opinion, Bukharin did not quite correctly set forth here the reason why the majority of the commission rejected all attempts to draw up the program in such a way as to delete everything that dealt with the old capitalism. Bukharin spoke in such a way that he sometimes seemed to imply that the majority of the commission was apprehensive of what might be said about this, apprehensive that the majority of the commission would be accused of insufficient respect for the past. There can be no doubt that when the position of the majority of the commission is put in this way it seems rather ludicrous. But it is very far from the truth. The majority of the commission rejected these attempts because they would be wrong. They would not correspond to the real state of affairs. Pure imperialism, without the fundamental basis of capitalism, has never existed, nowhere exists, and never will exist. This is a wrong generalization of everything that was said of the syndicates, cartels, trusts and finance capitalism, when finance capitalism was depicted as though it had none of the foundations of the old capitalism under it.

That is wrong. It would be particularly wrong for the era of the imperialist war and for the era following the imperialist war. Engels in his time, in one of his reflections on the future war, wrote that it would involve more devastation than that which followed the Thirty Years' War;* that in

---

* *The Thirty Years' War* (1618-48) in Germany.—*Ed.*

a large degree mankind would be reduced to savagery, that our artificial apparatus of trade and industry would collapse. At the beginning of the war the social-traitors and opportunists boasted of the tenacity of capitalism and derided "the fanatics or semi-anarchists," as they called us. "Look," they said, "these predictions have not been fulfilled. Events have shown that they were true only of a very small number of countries and for a very short period of time!" And now, not only in Russia and not only in Germany, but even in the victor countries, a gigantic collapse of modern capitalism is setting in, so gigantic that it frequently removes this artificial apparatus and gives birth to the old capitalism anew.

When Bukharin stated that an attempt might be made to present an integral picture of the collapse of capitalism and imperialism, we objected to it in the commission, and I must object to it here. Just try it, and you will see that it cannot be done. Bukharin made one such attempt in the commission, and himself rejected it. I am absolutely convinced that if anybody could do this, it is Bukharin, who has studied this question very extensively and thoroughly. I assert that such an attempt cannot be successful, because the task is a false one. We in Russia are now experiencing the consequences of the imperialist war and the beginning of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the same time, in a number of the regions of Russia, cut off from each other more than formerly, we are *frequently experiencing a regeneration of capitalism and the development of its early stage.* That is something we cannot escape. If the program were to be written in the way Bukharin wanted, it would be a false program At the best, it would be a reproduction of all the best that has been said of finance capitalism and imperialism, but it would not reproduce reality, precisely because there is no such integrality in this reality. A program made up of heterogeneous parts is inelegant (but that, of course, is not important)—but any other program would simply be incorrect However unpleasant it may be, whatever it may lack in proportion, we shall be unable for a long time to escape this heterogeneity, this necessity of constructing from various materials. When we do escape it, we shall create another program. But then we shall already be living in a Socialist society. It would be ridiculous to pretend that things will be then what they are now.

We are living at a time when a number of the most elementary and fundamental manifestations of capitalism have been revived. Take, for instance, the collapse of transport, which we are experiencing so well, or rather so badly, in our own case Why, this same thing is taking place in other countries, even in the victor countries And what does the collapse of transport mean under the imperialist system? A return to the most primitive forms of commodity production. We know very well what bag-traders are This word, I think, has hitherto been unknown to foreigners But what is the case now? Speak to the comrades who have arrived for the congress of the Third International. It appears that similar words are

beginning to appear in both Germany and Switzerland. And this is a category you cannot fit into any dictatorship of the proletariat; you have to return to the very sources of capitalist society and commodity production.

To escape from this sad reality by creating a smooth and integral program is to escape into something ethereal and supermundane, to write a false program. And it is by no means reverence for the past, as Bukharin politely hinted, which induced us here to insert passages from the old program. What appeared to be implied was this: the program in 1903 was written with the participation of Lenin; the program is undoubtedly a bad one; but since old people love to recall the past, in a new era a new program has been drawn up which, out of reverence for the past, repeats the old program. If it were so, such cranks ought to be laughed at. I assert that it is not so. The capitalism that was described in 1903 remains in force in 1919 in the Soviet proletarian republic just because of the disintegration of imperialism, because of its collapse. Capitalism of this kind can be found, for instance, both in the Samara Province and in the Vyatka Province, which are not very far from Moscow. In a period when civil war is rending the country, we shall not emerge from this situation, from this bag-trading, very soon. That is why any other structure of the program would be incorrect. We must state what actually exists; the program must contain what is absolutely irrefutable, what has been established in fact. Only then will it be a Marxist program.

Bukharin fully understands this theoretically and says that the program must be concrete. But it is one thing to understand and another to practise. Bukharin's concreteness consists in a bookish exposition of finance capitalism. Actually, we are observing heterogeneous phenomena. We observe in every agricultural province free competition side by side with monopolized industry. Nowhere in the world has monopoly capitalism existed in a whole series of branches without free competition, nor will it exist. To write of such a system is to write of a system which is divorced from reality and false. If Marx said of manufacture that it was a superstructure on mass small production, imperialism and finance capitalism are a superstructure on the old capitalism. If its summit is destroyed, the old capitalism is laid bare. If one holds the point of view that there is such a thing as integral imperialism without the old capitalism, the wish is father to the thought.

This is a natural mistake, one into which it is very easy to fall. And if we had an integral imperialism before us, which had entirely made over capitalism, our task would have been a hundred thousand times easier. It would have resulted in a system in which everything would have been subordinated to finance capital alone. It would then only have remained to remove the top and to transfer what remained to the proletariat. That would have been extremely agreeable, but it is not so in reality. In reality the development is such that we have to act in an entirely different way. *Imperialism is a superstructure on capitalism.* When it begins to collapse,

we find ourselves dealing with the destruction of the top and the exposure of the foundation. That is why our program, if it is to be a true one, must state what actually exists. There is the old capitalism, which in a number of branches has grown to imperialism. Its tendencies are exclusively imperialistic. Fundamental questions can be examined only from the standpoint of imperialism. There is not a single big question of home or foreign policy which could be settled in any way except from the standpoint of this tendency. It is not of this that the program now speaks. In reality, there exists a vast subsoil of the old capitalism. There is the superstructure of imperialism, which led to the war, and from this war followed the beginnings of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a phase you cannot escape. This fact is characteristic of the very rate of development of the proletarian revolution throughout the world, and will remain a fact for many years to come.

West-European revolutions will perhaps proceed more smoothly; nevertheless, very many years will be required for the reorganization of the whole world, for the reorganization of the majority of the countries. And this means that during the transition period through which we are now passing, we cannot escape this mosaic reality. We cannot cast aside this reality composed of heterogeneous parts, however inelegant it may be. If the program were drawn up otherwise than it has been drawn up, it would be a false program.

We say that we have arrived at the dictatorship. That is clear. But we must know *how* we arrived at it. The past holds fast to us, grasps us with a thousand tentacles, and does not allow us to make a single forward step, or compels us to make these steps as badly as we are making them. And we say that in order that the situation we are arriving at may be understood, it must be stated how we proceeded and what led us to the Socialist revolution. We were led to it by capitalism in its early commodity production forms. All this must be understood, because it is only by taking reality into account that we can solve such problems as, let us say, our attitude towards the middle peasantry. And how is it, indeed, that there is such a thing as a middle peasant in the era of purely imperialist capitalism? Why, he did not exist even in purely capitalist countries. If we are to solve the problem of our attitude towards this almost mediaeval phenomenon (the middle peasantry) purely from the standpoint of imperialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat, we shall be absolutely unable to fit ends together, and we shall land in many difficulties. But if we are to change our attitude towards the middle peasant—then also have the goodness to say in the theoretical part where he came from and what he is. He is a small commodity producer. And this is the ABC of capitalism, of which we must speak, because we have not yet got away from it. To brush this aside and say, "Why should we study the ABC when we have studied finance capitalism?" would be frivolous to a degree.

I have to say the same thing with regard to the *national question*.

Here too the wish is father to the thought with Bukharin. He says, that it is impossible to admit the right of nations to self-determination. A nation implies the bourgeoisie together with the proletariat. And are we the proletarians, to recognize the right to self-determination of the despised bourgeoisie? That is absolutely incompatible! Pardon me, it is compatible with what actually exists. If you eliminate this, the result will be sheer fantasy. You refer to the process of differentiation which is taking place in the depths of nations, the process of separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie. But let us take a look at the way this differentiation is proceeding.

Take, for instance, Germany, the model of an advanced capitalist country, which in respect to the organization of capitalism, finance capitalism, was superior to America. She was inferior in many respects, in respect to technical development and production and in respect to politics, but in respect to the organization of finance capitalism, in respect to the conversion of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly capitalism, Germany was superior to America. She is a model, it would seem. But what has taken place there? Has the German proletariat become differentiated from the bourgeoisie? No! Why, it was only of a few of the large towns that it was reported that the majority of the workers are opposed to the Scheidemannites. How was this? It was owing to the alliance between the Spartacists and the thrice-accursed German Menshevik-Independents, who make a muddle of everything and want to wed the system of Soviets to a Constituent Assembly! And this is what is taking place in Germany! And she, mark you, is an advanced country.

Bukharin says, "Why do we need the right of nations to self-determination?" I must repeat what I said in objection to him in the summer of 1917, when he proposed to delete the minimum program and to leave only the maximum program. I then retorted, "Don't shout until you're out of the wood." When we have conquered power, and even then after waiting a while, we shall do this. We have conquered power, we have waited a while, and now I am willing to do it. We have fully launched into Socialist construction, we have beaten off the first assault that threatened us—now it will be in place. The same applies to the right of nations to self-determination. "I want to recognize only the right of the toiling classes to self-determination," says Bukharin. That is to say, you want to recognize something that has not been achieved in a single country except Russia. That is ridiculous.

Look at Finland; she is a democratic country, more developed, more cultured than we are. In Finland a process of separation, of differentiation of the proletariat is proceeding in a peculiar way, far more painfully than was the case with us. The Finns have experienced the dictatorship of Germany; they are now experiencing the dictatorship of the Entente. And thanks to the fact that we recognize the right of nations to self-determination, the process of differentiation has been facilitated

there I very well recall the scene when, at the Smolny, it was my lot to hand an act to Svinhuvud—which in Russian means "swinehead"—the representative of the Finnish bourgeoisie, who played the part of a hangman He amiably shook my hand, we exchanged compliments How unpleasant that was! But it had to be done, because at that time the bourgeoisie was deceiving the people, was deceiving the toilers by declaring *that the Muscovites, the chauvinists, the Great Russians, wanted to stifle* the Finns It had to be done

And yesterday, was it not necessary to do the same thing in relation to the Bashkir Republic? When Bukharin said, "We can recognize this right in some cases " I even wrote down that he had included in the list the Hottentots, the Bushmen and the Indians Hearing this enumeration, I thought, how is it that Bukharin has forgotten a small trifle, the Bashkirs? There are no Bushmen in Russia, nor have I heard that the Hottentots have laid claim to an autonomous republic, but we have Bashkirs, Kirghiz and a number of other peoples, and to these we cannot deny recognition We cannot deny it to a single one of the peoples living within the boundaries of the former Russian Empire Let us even assume that the Bashkirs have overthrown the exploiters and we have helped them to do so But this is possible only where a revolution has fully matured And it must be done cautiously, so as not to retard by one s interference the process of differentiation of the proletariat which we ought to expedite What, then, can we do in relation to such peoples as the Kirghiz, the Sarts, who to this day are under the influence of their mullahs? In Russia the population, having had a long experience of the priests, helped us to overthrow them But you know how badly the decree on civil marriage is still being put into effect Can we approach these Sarts and say, "We shall overthrow your exploiters"? We cannot do this, because they are entirely under the influence of their mullahs In such cases we have to wait until the given nation develops, until the differentiation of the proletariat from the bourgeois elements, which is inevitable, has taken place

Bukharin does not want to wait He is possessed by impatience "Why should we? When we have ourselves overthrown the bourgeoisie, proclaimed a Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, why should we act thus? This has the effect of a rousing appeal, *it contains* an indication of our path, but if we were to proclaim only this in our program, it would not be a program, but a proclamation We may proclaim a Soviet power, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and utter contempt for the bourgeoisie, which it deserves a thousand times over, but in the program we must write absolutely and precisely just what actually exists And then our program will be irreproachable

We hold a strictly class standpoint What we are writing in the program is a recognition of what has in fact taken place since the period when we wrote of the self determination of nations in general At that time there were still no proletarian republics It was when they appeared, and only as

they appeared, that we were able to write what is here written: "A federation of states of the *Soviet type*." The Soviet type is not quite the Soviets as they exist in Russia, but the Soviet type is becoming international. And this is all we can say. To go farther, one step farther, one hair's breadth farther, would be false, and therefore unsuitable for a program.

We say that account must be taken of the stage at which the given nation finds itself on the way from mediaevalism to bourgeois democracy, and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. That is absolutely correct. All nations have the right to self-determination—there is no need to speak specially of the Hottentots and the Bushmen. The vast majority, most likely nine-tenths of the population of the earth, perhaps ninety-five per cent, come under this description, since all countries are on the way from mediaevalism to bourgeois democracy or from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy. This is an absolutely inevitable course. More cannot be said, because it would be wrong, because it would not be what actually exists. To reject the self-determination of nations and insert the self-determination of the toilers would be absolutely wrong, because this statement of the question does not reckon with the difficulties, with the zigzag course which differentiation within a nation takes. In Germany it is not proceeding in the same way as in our country: it is proceeding in certain respects more rapidly, and in other respects in a slower and more bloody way. Not a single party in our country adopted so monstrous an idea as a combination of Soviets and a Constituent Assembly. Why, we have to live side by side with these nations. The Scheidemannites are already saying that we want to conquer Germany. That is of course ridiculous, nonsensical. But the bourgeoisie has its own interests and its own press, which is shouting this to the whole world in hundreds of millions of copies; and Wilson is supporting this in his own interests. The Bolsheviks, they declare, have a large army, and they want by means of conquest to implant their Bolshevism in Germany. The best people in Germany—the Spartacists—told us that the German workers are being incited against the Communists: See, they are told, how bad things are with the Bolsheviks! And we cannot say that things with us are very good. And there they influence the masses with the argument that the proletarian revolution in Germany would result in the same disorders as in Russia. Our disorders are a protracted malady. We are striving against desperate difficulties in creating the proletarian dictatorship in our country. As long as the bourgeoisie, or the petty bourgeoisie, or even part of the German workers, are under the influence of this bugbear—"the Bolsheviks want to establish their system by force"—so long will the formula "the self-determination of the toilers" not help matters. We must arrange things so that the German social-traitors will not be able to say that the Bolsheviks are trying to impose their universal system, which, as it were, can be introduced into Berlin by Red Army bayonets. And this is what may happen if the principle of the self-determination of nations is denied.

Our program must not speak of the self determination of the toilers, because that would be wrong. It must speak of what actually exists. Since nations are at different stages on the road from mediaevalism to bourgeois democracy and from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy, this thesis of our program is absolutely right. With us there have been very many zigzags on this road Every nation must secure the right to self determination, and that will make the self determination of the toilers easier. In Finland the process of separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie is proceeding with remarkable clarity, force and profundity At any rate, things will proceed there not as they do in our country If we were to declare that we do not recognize the Finnish nation, but only the toiling masses, that would be sheer banality We cannot refuse to recognize what actually exists, it will itself compel us to recognize it The demarcation between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is proceeding in different ways in different countries Here we must act with great caution We must be particularly cautious with regard to the various nations, for there is nothing worse than lack of confidence in a nation Self determination of the proletariat is proceeding among the Poles Here are the latest figures on the composition of the Warsaw Soviet of Workers' Deputies Polish social-traitors—333, Communists—297 This shows that, according to our revolutionary calendar, October there is not very far off It is somewhere about August or September 1917 there But, firstly, no decree has yet been issued stating that all countries must live according to the Bolshevik revolutionary calendar, and even if it were issued it would not be observed And, secondly, the situation at present is such that the majority of the Polish workers, who are more advanced than ours, better educated, share the standpoint of social defencism, social patriotism We must wait We cannot speak here of the self determination of the toiling masses We must carry on propaganda on behalf of this differentiation This is what we are doing, but there is not the slightest shadow of doubt that we must recognize the self determination of the Polish nation now That is clear The Polish proletarian movement is taking the same course as ours, towards the *dictatorship of the proletariat, but not in the same way as in Russia* And there the workers are being scared by statements to the effect that the Muscovites, the Great Russians, who have always oppressed the Poles, want to carry their Great Russian chauvinism into Poland in the guise of Communism Communism cannot be imposed by force. When I said to one of the best comrades among the Polish Communists, "You will do it in a different way," he replied, 'No, we will do the same thing, but better than you" To such an argument I had absolutely nothing to object We must give them the opportunity of fulfilling a modest wish—to create a better Soviet government than ours We have to reckon with the fact that things there are [illegible] l we cannot say, "Down with the [illegible] We grant the right of self determin[illegible] self de-

termination proceeds in a very complex and difficult way. It exists nowhere but in Russia, and, while foreseeing every stage of development in other countries, we must decree nothing from Moscow. That is why this proposal is unacceptable in principle.

I now pass to the other points which I am to deal with in accordance with the plan we have drawn up. I have given first place to the question of *small proprietors and the middle peasants*. In this respect, point 47 states:

> "With respect to the middle peasants, the policy of the Russian Communist Party is gradually and systematically to draw them into the work of Socialist construction. The Party sets itself the task of separating them from the kulaks, of winning them to the side of the working class by carefully attending to their needs, of combating their backwardness with ideological weapons and not by measures of repression, and of striving in all cases where their vital interests are concerned to come to practical agreements with them, making concessions to them in determining the methods of carrying out Socialist reforms."

It seems to me that here we are formulating what the founders of Socialism have frequently said regarding the middle peasantry. The only defect of this clause is that it is not sufficiently concrete. We could hardly give more in a program. But it is not only questions of program we must discuss at the congress, and we must devote profound, thrice-profound attention to the question of the middle peasantry. We have just received information to the effect that in the revolts which have already begun to sweep like a wave through agricultural Russia, a *general plan* is clearly discernible, and that this plan is obviously connected with the military plan of the Whiteguards, who have decided on a general offensive in March and on the organization of a number of revolts. In the presidium of the congress there is a draft of a manifesto in the name of the congress, on which a report will be made to you. These revolts show as clear as clear can be that the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and a part of the Mensheviks —in Bryansk it was the Mensheviks who instigated the revolt—are acting as direct agents of the Whiteguards. A general offensive of the Whiteguards, revolts in the villages, the interruption of railroad traffic—perhaps it will be possible to overthrow the Bolsheviks in this way? Here the role of the middle peasantry stands out very clearly, very forcibly and insistently. At the congress we must not only lay particular stress on our accommodating attitude towards the middle peasantry, but also think over a number of measures, as concrete as possible, which will directly give the middle peasantry something at least. This is insistently demanded both by interests of self-preservation and by the interests of the struggle against our enemies, who know that the middle peasant vacillates between us and them and who are endeavouring to win him away from us. Our position is now such that we possess vast reserves.

We know that both the Polish and the Hungarian revolutions are growing, and very rapidly These revolutions will furnish us with *proletarian re serves*, will ease our situation and will to a very large extent reinforce our proletarian basis, which is weak This may happen in the next few months, but we do not know exactly when it will happen You know that an acute moment has now arisen, and therefore the question of the middle peasantry now assumes tremendous practical importance

Further, I should like to dwell on the question of *co operation*—that is point 48 of our program To a certain extent this point has become anti quated When we drafted it in the commission, co operatives existed in our country, but there were no consumers' communes, a few days later, however the decree on the merging of all forms of co operatives into a single con sumers' commune was issued I do not know whether this decree has been published and whether the majority here present are acquainted with it If not, to morrow or the day after this decree will be published In this res pect, this point is already out of date, but it nevertheless appears to me that it is necessary, for we all know very well that it is a pretty long way from decrees to fulfilment We have been toiling and moiling over the co oper atives since April 1918, and although we have achieved considerable suc cess, it is not yet a decisive success We have at times succeeded in organiz ing the population in the co operatives to such an extent that in many of the uyezds ninety eight per cent of the agricultural population are already so organized But these co operatives, which existed in capitalist society, are thoroughly imbued with the spirit of bourgeois society, and are headed by Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, by bourgeois experts We have not yet been able to bring them under our influence, and here our task remains unaccomplished Our decree is a step forward in the sense of crea ting consumers' communes, it decrees that all forms of co operation all over Russia shall be merged But this decree, too, even if we carry it into effect entirely preserves the autonomous sections of workers' co operatives within the future consumers' communes, because the representatives of the workers' co operatives who have a practical knowledge of the matter told us, and proved, that the workers' co operatives, as a more highly devel oped organization, should be preserved since their operations are demanded by necessity There were quite a few differences and disputes within our Party over the question of co operation, there was friction between the Bolsheviks in the co operatives and the Bolsheviks in the Soviets In prin ciple, it seems to me that the question should undoubtedly be settled in the sense that this apparatus, as the only apparatus which capitalism set up among the masses, as the only apparatus which operates among the rural masses, who are still in the stage of primitive capitalism, must be preserved at all costs, developed, and at any rate not discarded The task here is a difficult one because in the majority of cases the leaders of the co operatives are bourgeois specialists, very frequently real Whiteguards Hence the hatred for them, a genuine hatred, hence the fight against them But it

must, of course, be carried through skilfully: *we must put a stop to the counter-revolutionary attempts of the co-operators, but this must not be a struggle against the apparatus of the co-operatives.* While cutting off the counter-revolutionary leaders, we must subordinate the apparatus itself to our influence. Here the aim is exactly what it is in the case of the bourgeois experts. That is another question to which I should like to refer.

The question of the *bourgeois experts* is provoking quite a lot of friction and divergence of opinion. When I recently had occasion to speak in the Petrograd Soviet, among the written questions submitted to me there were several devoted to the question of rates of pay. I was asked: is it feasible for a Socialist republic to pay as much as 3,000 rubles? We have, in fact, included this question in the program, because dissatisfaction on these grounds has gone rather far. The question of the bourgeois experts has arisen in the army, in industry, in the co-operatives, everywhere. It is a very important question of the period of transition from capitalism to Communism. We shall be able to build up Communism when, with the aid of bourgeois science and technology, we make it more accessible to the masses. There is no other way of building a Communist society. But in order to build it in this way, we must take the apparatus from the bourgeoisie, we must enlist all these experts in the work. We have intentionally developed this question in detail in the program in order that it may be settled radically. We are fully aware of the effects of Russia's lack of cultural development, what it is doing to Soviet government—which in principle has provided an immeasurably higher proletarian democracy, which serves as a model of such democracy for the whole world—how this lack of culture is depreciating Soviet government and reviving bureaucracy. The Soviet apparatus is accessible to all the toilers in word, but in fact it is far from accessible to all of them, as we all know. And not because the laws prevent it from being so, as was the case under the bourgeoisie; on the contrary, the laws assist in this respect. But here laws alone are not enough. A vast amount of educational, organizational and cultural work is required, which cannot be done rapidly by legislation and which demands a vast amount of prolonged work. This question of the bourgeois experts must be settled at this congress absolutely definitely. The settlement of the question will enable the comrades, who are undoubtedly following this congress attentively, to rest on its authority and to realize what difficulties we are up against. It will help those comrades who come up against this question at every step to take part at least in propaganda work.

The comrades here in Moscow who are representing the Spartacists at the congress told us that in Western Germany, where industry is most developed, and where the influence of the Spartacists among the workers is greatest, engineers and managers in very many of the large enterprises would come to the Spartacists, although the Spartacists have not yet been victorious there, and say, "We shall follow you." That was not the case in our country. Evidently, there the higher cultural level of the workers, the

greater proletarianization of the technical staffs, and perhaps a number of other causes of which we do not know, have created relations which differ somewhat from ours.

At any rate, here we have one of the chief obstacles to further progress. We must immediately, without waiting for the support of other countries, immediately and at once develop our productive forces. We cannot do this without the bourgeois experts. That must be said once and for all. Of course, the majority of these experts are thoroughly imbued with the bourgeois outlook. They must be placed in an environment of comradely collaboration, by workers' commissars and by Communist nuclei; they must be so placed that they cannot break away; but they must be given the opportunity of working in better conditions than was the case under capitalism, since this stratum, which has been trained by the bourgeoisie, will not work otherwise. To compel a whole stratum to work under the lash is impossible—that we know very well from experience. We can compel them not to take an active part in counter-revolution, we can strike terror into them so as to make them dread taking up a Whiteguard manifesto. In this respect the Bolsheviks act energetically. This can be done, and this we are doing adequately. This we have all learnt to do. But it is impossible in this way to compel a whole stratum to work. These people are accustomed to cultural work, they advanced it within the limits of the bourgeois system; that is, they enriched the bourgeoisie with tremendous material acquisitions, while conferring them on the proletariat in insignificant doses—but they advanced culture, that was their profession. As they see the working class promoting organized and advanced strata, which not only value culture but also help to convey it to the masses, they are changing their attitude towards us. When a doctor sees that the proletariat is arousing the toilers to independent activity in fighting epidemics, his attitude towards us completely changes. We have a large stratum of such bourgeois doctors, engineers, agronomists and co-operators, and when they see in practice that the proletariat is attracting an increasing number of the masses to this cause, they will be conquered *morally*, and not merely be cut off from the bourgeoisie politically. Our task will then become easier. They will then of themselves be drawn into our apparatus and become part of it. For this, sacrifices are essential. To pay even two billions for this is a trifle. To fear this sacrifice would be childish, for it would mean that we do not comprehend the tasks that confront us.

The dislocation of transport, the dislocation of industry and agriculture is undermining the whole life of the Soviet Republic. Here we must resort to the most energetic measures, bending all the energies of the country to the utmost. We must not practice a policy of petty pinpricks with regard to the experts. These experts are not the servitors of the exploiters, they are active cultural workers, who in bourgeois society served the bourgeoisie, and of whom all Socialists all over the world said that in a proletarian society they would serve *us*. In this transition period we must endow

them with the best possible conditions of life. That will be the best policy. That will be the most economical management. Otherwise, while economizing a few hundred millions, we may lose so much that no number of billions will restore what we have lost.

When we discussed the question of rates of pay with the Commissar of Labour, Schmidt, he mentioned facts like these. He said that in the matter of equalizing wages we have done more than has been done anywhere, and more than any bourgeois state can do in scores of years. Take the pre-war rates of pay: a manual labourer used to get one ruble a day, twenty-five rubles a month, while an expert got five hundred rubles a month, not counting those who were paid hundreds of thousands of rubles. The expert used to receive twenty times more than the worker. Our present rates of pay vary from six hundred rubles to three thousand rubles—five times more. We have done a great deal in the matter of equalization. Of course, we are now overpaying experts, but to pay them a little more for science is not only worthwhile, but necessary and theoretically essential. In my opinion, this question is dealt with in sufficient detail in the program. It must be profoundly stressed. Not only must it be settled here in principle, but we must see to it that every member of the congress, on returning to his locality, should, in his report to his organization and in all his activities, secure its accomplishment.

We have already brought about a profound change of attitude among the vacillating intellectuals. If yesterday we spoke of legalizing the petty-bourgeois parties, whereas today we are arresting the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, we are applying an absolutely definite system in these oscillations. A very firm line runs through these oscillations, namely, *to destroy counter-revolution and to utilize the cultural apparatus of the bourgeoisie.* The Mensheviks are the worst possible enemies of Socialism, because they clothe themselves in a proletarian disguise; but the Mensheviks are a non-proletarian stratum. In this stratum there is only an insignificant proletarian upper layer, while the stratum itself consists of petty intellectuals. This stratum is coming over to our side. We shall take it over wholly, as a stratum. Every time they come to us, we say, "Welcome!" With every one of these vacillations, part of them come over to us. Such was the case with the Mensheviks and the *Novaya Zhizn*-ites* and with the Socialist-Revolutionaries; such will be the case with all these vacillating elements, who will long continue to get in our way, whine and desert from one camp to the other—you cannot do anything with them. But through all these vacillations we shall be enlisting strata of cultured intellectuals in the ranks of Soviet workers, and shall cut off those elements that continue to support the Whiteguards.

The next question which, according to the division of subjects, falls to my share is the *question of bureaucracy and of enlisting the broad masses*

* *Novaya Zhizn*-ites—the so-called "Menshevik-Internationalists" who grouped around the *Novaya Zhizn*, a newspaper published in Petrograd in 1917.—*Ed.*

in Soviet work. We have been hearing complaints about bureaucracy for a long time, the complaints are undoubtedly well founded We have done what no other state has done in the fight against bureaucracy. The apparatus which was a thoroughly bureaucratic and bourgeois apparatus of oppression, and which remains such even in the freest of bourgeois republics, we have destroyed to its very foundations. Take, for example, the courts. Here, it is true, the task was easier, we did not have to create a new apparatus, because anybody can act as a judge with the help of the revolutionary sense of justice of the toiling classes. Here we have still far from completed the work, but in a number of regions we have made the courts what they should be. We have created bodies in which not only men, but also women, the most backward and conservative of elements, can serve without exception.

The employees in the other spheres of government are more hardened bureaucrats. The task here is more difficult. We cannot live without this apparatus, every branch of government creates a demand for such an apparatus. Here we are suffering from the fact that Russia was not sufficiently developed capitalistically. Germany, apparently, is suffering less from this, because her bureaucratic apparatus passed through an extensive school, which sucks people dry but which compels them to work and not just wear out armchairs, as happens in our offices. We dispersed these old bureaucratic elements, shook them up and then began to place them in new posts. The tsarist bureaucrats began to enter the Soviet institutions and practice their bureaucratic methods, they began to assume the colouring of Communists and, for greater success in their careers, to procure membership cards of the Russian Communist Party. And so, having been thrown out of the door, they fly in through the window! What makes itself felt here most is the lack of cultured forces. These bureaucrats may be dismissed, but they cannot be re-educated all at once. Here we are confronted chiefly with organizational, cultural and educational problems.

We can fight bureaucracy to the bitter end, to a complete victory, only when the whole population participates in the work of government. In the bourgeois republics not only was this impossible, *but the very law prevented it* The best of the bourgeois republics, no matter how democratic they may be, have thousands of legislative hindrances which prevent the toilers from participating in the work of government. We have removed these hindrances, but so far we have not managed to get the toiling masses to participate in the work of government. Apart from the law, there is still the level of culture, which you cannot subject to any law. The result of this low cultural level is that the Soviets, which by virtue of their program are organs of government *by the toilers*, are in fact organs of government *for the toilers*, by means of the advanced stratum of the proletariat, but not by means of the toiling masses.

Here we are confronted by a problem which cannot be solved except

by prolonged education. At present this task is an inordinately difficult one for us, because, as I have had frequent occasion to say, the stratum of workers who are governing is an inordinately, incredibly *thin* one. We must secure help. According to all the signs, such a reserve is growing up within the country. There cannot be the slightest doubt of the existence of a tremendous thirst for knowledge and of tremendous progress in education—mostly attained by means of extra-school methods—of tremendous progress in educating the toiling masses. This progress cannot be confined within any school framework, but it is tremendous. All the signs go to show that this may result in a vast reserve in the near future, which will replace the representatives of the thin stratum of proletarians who have over-exhausted themselves in the work. But, in any case, our present situation in this respect is an extremely difficult one. Bureaucracy has been defeated. The exploiters have been eliminated. But the cultural level has not been raised, and therefore the bureaucrats are occupying their old positions. They can be forced out only if the proletariat and the peasantry are organized far more widely than has hitherto been the case, and only if real measures are taken to enlist the workers in the work of government. You are all acquainted with such measures in the case of every People's Commissariat, and I will not dwell on them.

The last point I have to touch on is the question of *the leading role of the proletariat and disfranchisement*. Our constitution recognizes the privileged position of the proletariat over the peasantry and the disfranchisement of the exploiters. It was this that the pure democrats of Western Europe attacked most. We retorted, and retort, that they have forgotten the most fundamental propositions of Marxism, they have forgotten that with them it is a case of bourgeois democracy, whereas we have passed to *proletarian* democracy. There is not a single country which has done a tenth of what the Soviet Republic has done in the past few months for the workers and the poor peasants in enlisting them in the work of administering the state. That is an absolute fact. Nobody will deny that in the matter of true, not paper, democracy, in the matter of enlisting the workers and peasants, we have done more than has been done or could be done by the best of the democratic republics in hundreds of years. It was this that determined the importance of the Soviets, it was owing to this that the Soviets have become a slogan for the proletariat of all countries.

But this in no way saves us from the fact that we are up against the inadequate culture of the masses. We do not regard the question of disfranchising the bourgeoisie from an absolute point of view, because it is theoretically quite conceivable that the dictatorship of the proletariat may suppress the bourgeoisie on every hand without disfranchising the bourgeoisie. This is theoretically quite conceivable. Nor do we advance our constitution as a model for other countries. All we say is that whoever conceives the transition to Socialism without the suppression of the bour-

geoisie is not a Socialist But while it is essential to suppress the bourgeoisie as a class, it is not essential to deprive them of the suffrage and of equality We do not want freedom for the bourgeoisie, we do not recognize equality of exploiters and exploited, but in the program we treat this question from the standpoint that measures such as the inequality of workers and peasants are by no means prescribed by the Constitution They were embodied in the constitution *after* they were already in actual practice It was not even the Bolsheviks who drew up the constitution of the Soviets, it was drawn up to their own detriment by the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries before the Bolshevik revolution They drew it up in the way life itself had drawn it up The organization of the proletariat proceeded much more rapidly than the organization of the peasantry, which fact made the workers the bulwark of the revolution and gave them a virtual privilege The next task is gradually to pass from these privileges to their equalization Nobody drove the bourgeoisie out of the Soviets either before or after the October Revolution *The bourgeoisie themselves left the Soviets*

That is how the matter stands with the question of the franchise for the bourgeoisie It is our task to put the question with absolute clarity We do not in the least apologize for our conduct, but give an absolutely precise enumeration of the facts as they are As we point out, our constitution was obliged to introduce this inequality because the cultural level was low and because with us organization was weak But we do not make this an ideal, on the contrary, in the program the Party undertakes to work systematically for the abolition of this inequality between the more organized proletariat and the peasantry, an inequality we shall have to abandon as soon as we succeed in raising the cultural level We shall then be able to get along without these limitations At present, after some seventeen months of revolution, these limitations are in practice already of very small importance

These, comrades, are the main points on which I considered it necessary to dwell, in the general discussion of the program, in order to leave their further consideration to the discussion [*Applause*]

Published in 1919 in *The Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*

WORK IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS

REPORT DELIVERED AT THE EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS), MARCH 23, 1919

[*Prolonged applause.*] Comrades, I must apologize for having been unable to attend all the meetings of the committee elected by the congress to consider the question of work in the rural districts. My report will therefore be supplemented by the speeches of comrades who took part in the work of the committee from the very beginning. The committee finally drew up theses which were submitted to a commission and which will be reported on to you. I should like to dwell on the general significance of the question as it confronted us as the result of the work of the committee and as, in my opinion, it confronts the whole Party.

Comrades, it is quite natural that in the course of the development of the proletarian revolution we have to give prominence first to one and then to another of the more complex and important problems of social life. It is perfectly natural that in a revolution which affects, and is bound to affect, the profoundest springs of life and the broadest masses of the population, not a single party, not a single government, no matter how close it may be to the masses, can embrace all phases of life *at once.* And if we are now obliged to deal with the question of work in the rural districts, and in connection with this question to give prime place to the position of the middle peasantry, there is nothing strange or abnormal in this from the standpoint of the development of the proletarian revolution in general. It is obvious that the proletarian revolution had to begin with the fundamental relations between two hostile classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The principal aim was to transfer the power to the working class, to set up its dictatorship, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to deprive it of the economic sources of its power, which are undoubtedly a hindrance to Socialist construction in general. Acquainted as we were with Marxism, we never for a moment doubted the truth that, owing to the very economic structure of capitalist society, the deciding factor in that society can be either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. We now see many former Marxists—among the Mensheviks, for example—who assert that in a period of decisive struggle between the proletariat and

the bourgeoisie *democracy in general* can prevail. The Mensheviks, who have completely identified themselves with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, talk in this way. As though the bourgeoisie itself does not create or abolish democracy as it finds most convenient for itself! And if that is so, there can be no question of democracy in general at a time of acute struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is astonishing how rapidly these Marxists, or pseudo-Marxists—our Mensheviks, for example—expose themselves, and how rapidly their true nature as petty-bourgeois democrats comes to the surface.

Marx all his life vigorously fought the illusions of petty-bourgeois democracy and bourgeois democracy. Marx particularly scoffed at the empty words, freedom and equality, when they serve as screens for the freedom of the workers to die of starvation, or the equality of one who sells his labour power with the bourgeois who allegedly freely purchases the labour of the former in the open market as from an equal, and so forth. Marx explains this in all his economic works. It may be said that the whole of Marx's *Capital* is devoted to explaining the truth that *the basic forces of capitalist society are, and can only be, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat*—the bourgeoisie, as the builder of capitalist society, as its guide, as its motive force, and the proletariat, as its grave digger and as the only force capable of replacing it. One can hardly find a single chapter in a single one of Marx's works that is not devoted to this. One might say that all over the world the Socialists of the Second International have vowed and sworn to the workers time out of number that they understand this truth. But when matters reached the stage of the real and decisive struggle for power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie we find that our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, like the leaders of the old Socialist parties all over the world, forgot this truth and began to repeat in a purely automatic way the philistine talk about democracy in general.

Attempts are sometimes made to lend these words what is considered to be greater force by speaking of "the dictatorship of democracy." That is sheer nonsense. We are well aware from history that the dictatorship of the democratic bourgeoisie meant nothing but the suppression of the insurrectionary workers. That has been the case ever since 1848—at any rate, not later, and isolated examples may be found even earlier. History shows that it is precisely in a bourgeois democracy that a most acute struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie widely and freely proceeds. We have had occasion to convince ourselves of the soundness of this truth in practice. And the measures taken by the Soviet government since October 1917 were distinguished by their firmness on all fundamental questions because we have never departed from this truth and have never forgotten it. The struggle for supremacy waged against the bourgeoisie can be determined only by the dictatorship of one class—the proletariat. Only the dictatorship of the proletariat can defeat the bour-

geoisie. Only the proletariat can overthrow the bourgeoisie. And only the proletariat can secure the following of the masses in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

However, it by no means follows from this—it would be a profound mistake to think it does—that in the future work of building Communism, now that the bourgeoisie has been overthrown and political power is already in the hands of the proletariat, we can continue to carry on without the assistance of the middle and intermediary elements.

It is only natural that at the beginning of the revolution—the proletarian revolution—the whole attention of its active participants should be concentrated on the main and fundamental thing, the supremacy of the proletariat and the achievement of that supremacy by a victory over the bourgeoisie, the achievement of a situation which would make it impossible for the bourgeoisie to return to power. We are well aware that the bourgeoisie still enjoys the advantages derived from the wealth it possesses in other countries or even the monetary wealth it sometimes possesses in our own country. We are well aware that there are social elements who are more experienced than proletarians and who aid the bourgeoisie. We are well aware that the bourgeoisie has not abandoned the idea of returning to power and has not ceased attempting to restore its supremacy.

But that is by no means all. The bourgeoisie, which adheres faithfully to the principle "my country is wherever it is good for me," and which, as far as money is concerned, has always been international—*the bourgeoisie internationally is at present still stronger than we are.* Its supremacy is being rapidly undermined, it is being confronted with such facts as the Hungarian revolution—about which we were happy to inform you of yesterday and of which we are today receiving confirmation—and it is beginning to understand that its supremacy is shaky. It no longer enjoys freedom of action. But now, if one reckons the material forces available all over the world, we are obliged to admit that materially the bourgeoisie is at present still stronger than we are.

That is why nine-tenths of our attention and our practical activities were devoted, and had to be devoted, to this fundamental question—the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the establishment of the power of the proletariat and the removal of every possibility of the return to power of the bourgeoisie. That is absolutely natural, legitimate and unavoidable, and much in this respect has been successfully accomplished.

Now, however, we must devote our attention to other strata of the population. We must devote our attention—and this was our conclusion in the agrarian committee, and on this, we are convinced, all Party workers will agree, because we merely summarized the results of their observations—we must now devote our attention to *the question of the middle peasantry* in its full magnitude.

Of course, people will be found who, instead of reflecting on the course

of our revolution, instead of pondering over the tasks now confronting us, will make every measure of the Soviet government a butt of derision and criticism of the type indulged in by those gentlemen, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries These people have still not understood that they must make a choice between us and the bourgeois dictatorship We have displayed the utmost patience, even indulgence, towards these people We shall allow them to enjoy our indulgence once more But we shall in the very near future set a limit to our patience and indulgence, and if they do not make their choice, we shall tell them in all seriousness to go to Kolchak [*Applause*] We do not expect particularly brilliant intellectual ability from such people [*Laughter*] But it might have been expected that after experiencing the bestialities of Kolchak they would have understood that we are entitled to demand that they should choose between us and Kolchak If during the first few months that followed the October Revolution there were many naive people who were stupid enough to believe that the dictatorship of the proletariat was a transitory and fortuitous thing, today even the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries ought to understand that it is a normal phenomenon in the struggle that is being waged under the onslaught of the international bourgeoisie

Only two forces, in fact, exist the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat Whoever has not learnt this from Marx, whoever has not learnt this from the works of all the great Socialists, has never been a Socialist, has never understood Socialism, and has only called himself a Socialist We are allowing these people a short space for reflection and demand that they make their decision I have mentioned them because they are now saying, or will say "The Bolsheviks have raised the question of the middle peasants, they want to make advances to them " I am very well aware that considerable space is given in the Menshevik press to arguments of this kind, and even far worse We ignore such arguments, we never attach importance to the jabber of our opponents People who are still capable of running to and fro between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat may say what they please Their road is not ours.

Our road is primarily determined by considerations of class forces. A struggle is developing in capitalist society between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat As long as that struggle has not ended we shall give our keenest attention to ending it It has not yet ended In that struggle much has already been accomplished The hands of the international bourgeoisie are no longer free The best proof of this is that the Hungarian proletarian revolution has taken place It is therefore clear that our constructive work in the rural districts has now gone beyond the limits to which it was confined when everything was subordinated to the fundamental demand of the struggle for power

This constructive work passed through two main phases In October 1917 we seized power *together with the peasantry as a whole* This was a

bourgeois revolution, inasmuch as the class war in the rural districts had not yet developed. As I have said, the real proletarian revolution in the rural districts began only in the summer of 1918. Had we not succeeded in stirring up this revolution our work would have been incomplete. The first stage was the seizure of power in the cities and the establishment of the Soviet form of government. The second stage was one which is fundamental for all Socialists and without which Socialists are not Socialists, namely, to single out the proletarian and the semi-proletarian elements in the rural districts and to weld them with the urban proletariat in order to wage the struggle against the bourgeoisie in the countryside. This stage is also in the main completed. The organizations we originally created for this purpose, the Committees of Poor Peasants, had become so consolidated that we found it possible to replace them by properly elected Soviets, *i.e.*, to reorganize the village Soviets so as to make them the organs of class supremacy, the organs of proletarian power in the rural districts. Such measures as the law on Socialist agrarian measures and measures for the transition to Socialist agriculture, which was passed not very long ago by the Central Executive Committee and with which everybody, of course, is familiar, sum up our experiences from the standpoint of our proletarian revolution.

The main thing, the prime and basic task of the proletarian revolution, we have already accomplished. And because we have accomplished it, a more complicated problem has arisen—*our policy towards the middle peasantry*. And whoever thinks that the fact that this problem is being brought to the fore is in any way symptomatic of a weakening of the character of our government, of a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that it is symptomatic of a change, however partial, however minute, in our basic policy, completely fails to understand the aims of the proletariat and the aims of the Communist revolution. I am convinced that there are no such people in our Party. I only desire to warn the comrades against people not belonging to the workers' party who will talk in this way, not because it follows from any system of ideas, but merely to spoil things for us and to help the Whiteguards—or, to put it more simply, to incite against us the middle peasant, who is always vacillating, who cannot help vacillating, and who will continue to vacillate for a fairly long time to come. In order to incite the middle peasant against us they will say: "See, they are making advances to you! That means they have taken your revolts to heart, they are beginning to wobble," and so on and so forth. All our comrades must be armed against agitation of this kind. And I am certain that they will be armed—provided, that is, we succeed in having this question treated from the standpoint of the class struggle.

It is perfectly obvious that this fundamental problem—*how precisely to define the policy of the proletariat towards the middle peasantry*—is a much more complex but no less urgent and essential problem. Comrades, from the theoretical point of view, which has been mastered by the vast

majority of the workers, this question presents no difficulty to Marxists I will remind you, for instance, that in his book *The Agrarian Question*, written at a time when he was still correctly expounding the doctrine of Marx and was regarded as an undisputed authority in this field Kautsky states in connection with the transition from capitalism to Socialism that the task of a Socialist party *is to neutralize the peasantry*, *i e* , to see to it that in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie the peasant should remain neutral and should not be able to give active assistance to the bourgeoisie against us

Throughout the long period of the domination of the bourgeoisie, the peasants supported the power of the latter, they sided with the bourgeoisie This will be understood if one remembers the economic strength of the bourgeoisie and the political methods by which it rules We cannot count on the middle peasant coming over to our side immediately But if we pursue a correct policy, after a time these vacillations will cease and the peasant will be able to come over to our side

It was Engels—who together with Marx laid the foundations of scientific Marxism, that is, the doctrine by which our Party has always guided itself, and particularly in time of revolution—who already established the division of the peasantry into small peasants, middle peasants and big peasants, and this division holds good for the vast majority of European countries even at the present day Engels said ' Perhaps it will not everywhere be necessary to suppress even the big peasantry by force " And that we might at any time exercise force in relation to the middle peasants (the small peasant is our friend), that thought never occurred to any sensible Socialist That is what Engels said in 1894, a year before his death, when the agrarian question assumed prominence This point of view expresses a truth which is sometimes forgotten, but with which we are all in theory agreed In relation to the landlords and the capitalists our aim is complete expropriation *But we shall not tolerate any violence towards the middle peasantry* Even in regard to the rich peasants we are not as decisive as we are in regard to the bourgeoisie we do not demand the absolute expropriation of the rich peasants and the kulaks This distinction is made in our program We say that the resistance and the counterrevolutionary efforts of the rich peasant must be suppressed That is not complete expropriation

The basic distinction that determines our policy towards the bourgeoisie and the middle peasant—complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie and an alliance with the middle peasant who does not exploit others—this basic line is admitted by everybody in theory But this line is not consistently observed in practice, they have not yet learnt to observe it in the localities When, after having overthrown the bourgeoisie and consolidated its power, the proletariat started from various angles to create a new society, the question of the middle peasant came to the fore Not a single Socialist in the world denied that the building of Communism

would take different courses in countries where large-scale agriculture prevails and in countries where small-scale agriculture prevails. That is an elementary truth. And from this truth it follows that as we approach the problem of Communist construction our principal attention must to a certain extent be concentrated precisely on the middle peasant.

Much will depend on how we define our policy towards the middle peasant. Theoretically, that question has been solved; but we know from our own experience that there is a difference between solving a problem theoretically and putting that solution into practical effect. We are now directly confronted with that difference, which was so characteristic of the Great French Revolution, when the French Convention launched into sweeping measures but did not possess the necessary base of support in order to put them into effect, and did not even know on what class to rely in order to put any particular measure into effect.

Our position is an infinitely more fortunate one. Thanks to a whole century of development, we know on which class to rely. But we also know that the practical experience of that class is extremely inadequate. The fundamental aim was obvious to the working class and the workers' party—to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and to transfer power to the workers. But *how* was that to be done? You all remember with what difficulty and at the cost of what mistakes we proceeded from workers' control to workers' management of industry. And yet that was work within our class, within the proletarian midst, with which we had always had to deal. But now we are called upon to define our attitude towards a new class, a class the urban worker does not know. We have to determine our attitude towards a class which has no definite and stable position. The mass of the proletariat is in favour of Socialism, the mass of the bourgeoisie is opposed to Socialism. It is easy to determine the relations between these two classes. But when we pass to a stratum like the middle peasantry we find that *it is a class that vacillates*. The middle peasant is partly a property-owner and partly a toiler. He does not exploit other toilers. For decades the middle peasant defended his position with the greatest difficulty, he suffered the exploitation of the landlords and the capitalists, he bore everything. Yet he is a property-owner. Our attitude towards this vacillating class therefore presents enormous difficulties. In the light of more than a year's experience, in the light of more than six months' proletarian work in the rural districts, and in the light of the fact that class differentiation in the rural districts has already taken place, we must most of all refrain here from being too hasty, from being clumsily theoretical, from claiming to regard what is in process of being accomplished, but has not yet been accomplished, as already accomplished. In the resolution which is being proposed to us by the commission elected by the committee, and which will be read to you by a subsequent speaker, you will find sufficient warning against this.*

* See Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. VIII, pp. 184-187.—*Ed.*

From the economic point of view, it is obvious that we must help the middle peasant. Theoretically, there can be no doubt of this. But because of our habits, our level of culture, the inadequacy of the cultural and technical forces, we are in a position to place at the disposal of the rural districts, and because of the impotent manner in which we often approach the rural districts, comrades quite often resort to coercion and thus spoil everything. Only yesterday a comrade gave me a pamphlet entitled *Instructions and Regulations on Party Work in the Nizhni-Novgorod Province*, issued by the Nizhni-Novgorod Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and in this pamphlet, for example, I find on p. 41:

> "The whole burden of the extraordinary tax decree must be placed on the shoulders of the village kulaks and profiteers and *the middle element of the peasantry generally*."

Well, well! These people have indeed "understood." This is either a printer's error—and it is intolerable that such printer's errors should be committed—or a piece of rushed, hasty work, which shows how dangerous all haste is in this matter. Or—and this is the worst presumption of all, one I would not like to make with regard to the Nizhni Novgorod comrades—they have simply failed to understand. It may very well be that it is an oversight.

We have in practice cases like the one related by a comrade in the commission. He was surrounded by peasants, and every one of them asked: "Tell me, am I a middle peasant or not? I have two horses and one cow. I have two cows and one horse," etc. And this agitator, who was making a tour of the uyezds, was expected to possess an infallible thermometer with which to gauge every peasant and say whether he was a middle peasant or not. To do that one must know the whole history of the given peasant's farm, his relation to higher and lower groups—and we cannot know that with absolute accuracy.

Considerable practical ability and knowledge of local conditions is required here. And we have not got this yet. One need not be ashamed to confess it, it must be admitted frankly. We were never utopians and never imagined that we would build the Communist society with the pure hands of pure Communists, born and educated in a pure Communist society. That is a fairy tale. We have to build Communism from the debris of capitalism, and only the class which has been tempered in the struggle against capitalism can do that. The proletariat, as you are very well aware, is not free from the shortcomings and weaknesses of capitalist society. It is fighting for Socialism, but at the same time it is fighting its own shortcomings. The best and foremost section of the proletariat, which carried on a desperate struggle in the cities for decades, could in the course of that struggle acquire the culture of the city and of life in the capital, and to a certain extent it did acquire it. You know that even in advanced countries the rural districts were condemned to ignorance and darkness.

Of course, we shall raise the level of culture in the rural districts, but that will be a work of many years. That is what our comrades everywhere are forgetting and what is being strikingly brought home to us by every word uttered by people who come from the rural districts; not by the local intellectuals, not by the officials—we have listened to them a lot—but by people who have in practice observed the work in the rural districts. It was these opinions that we found particularly valuable in the agrarian committee. These opinions will be particularly valuable now—I am convinced of that—for the whole Party Congress, for they are derived not from books, and not from decrees, but from experience!

All this obliges us to work in a way that will introduce the greatest possible clarity into our relations with the middle peasant. This is very difficult, because *this clarity does not exist in reality*. Not only is this problem unsolved, it is *unsolvable*, if you want to solve it *immediately and all at once*. There are people who say that there was no need to write so many decrees. They accuse the Soviet government of setting about writing decrees without knowing how they were to be put into effect. These people, as a matter of fact, do not realize that they are tending towards the Whiteguards. If we had expected that life in the rural districts could be changed by writing hundreds of decrees, we should have been absolute idiots. But if we had refrained from indicating in decrees the road that must be followed, we should have been traitors to Socialism. These decrees, while they could not be carried into effect fully and immediately, played an important part as propaganda. While formerly we carried on our propaganda by means of general truths, *we are now carrying on our propaganda by our work*. That is also preaching, but it is preaching in action—only not action in the sense of isolated sallies, at which we scoffed so much in the era of the anarchists and the Socialism of the old type. Our decree is a call to action, but not the old call to action: "Workers, arise and overthrow the bourgeoisie!" No, it is a call to the masses, it calls them to practical action. *Decrees are instructions which call for practical mass action*. That is what is important. Let us assume that decrees do contain much that is useless, much that in practice cannot be put into effect; but they contain material for practical action, and the purpose of a decree is to teach practical measures to the hundreds, thousands and millions of people who hearken to the word of the Soviet government. This is a trial in practical action in the sphere of Socialist construction in the rural districts. If we regard matters in this way we shall acquire a good deal from the sum total of our laws, decrees and ordinances. We shall not regard them as absolute injunctions which must be put into effect instantly and at all costs.

We must avoid everything that in practice may tend to encourage individual abuses. In places careerists and adventurers have attached themselves to us like leeches, people who call themselves Communists and are deceiving us, and who have wormed their way into our ranks because the Communists are now in power, and because the more honest

official elements refused to come and work with us on account of their retrograde ideas, while careerists have no ideals, and no honesty These people, whose only aim is to make a career, are in various localities resorting *to coercion and imagining they are doing a good thing* But in fact the result of this at times is that the peasants exclaim "Long live the Soviet government, but *down with the Commune!*" (i e , Communism) These are not imaginary cases, they are taken from real life, from the reports of comrades in the localities We must not forget what enormous damage is caused by excess, rashness and haste

We had to hurry and, by taking a desperate leap, to get out of the imperialist war, which had brought us to the verge of collapse We had to make desperate efforts to crush the bourgeoisie and the forces that were threatening to crush us All this was essential, without all this we could not have triumphed But if we were to act in the same way towards the middle peasant it would be such idiocy, such stupidity, it would be so ruinous to our cause, that only provocateurs could deliberately act in such a way The aim here must be an entirely different one Here the question is not one of smashing the resistance of deliberate exploiters, of defeating them and overthrowing them—which was the aim we previously set ourselves No, now that this main purpose has been accomplished, more complicated problems arise You cannot create anything here by coercion *Coercion applied to the middle peasantry would cause untold harm* This stratum is a numerous one, it consists of millions of individuals Even in Europe, where it nowhere achieves such strength, where technology and culture, city life and railroads are tremendously developed, and where it would be easiest of all to think of such a thing, nobody, not even the most revolutionary of Socialists, has ever proposed adopting measures of coercion towards the middle peasantry

When we took over power we relied on the support of the peasantry as a whole At that time the aim of all the peasants was identical—to fight the landlords But their prejudice against large scale farming has remained to this day The peasant thinks "A large farm, that means I shall again be an agricultural labourer " That, of course, is a mistake But the peasant s idea of large scale farming is associated with a feeling of hatred and the memory of how the landlords used to oppress the people That feeling still remains, it has not yet died down

We must particularly stress the truth that here, by the very nature of the case, coercive methods can accomplish nothing The economic task here is an entirely different one Here there is not that upper layer which can be cut off, leaving the foundations and the building intact That upper layer which in the cities was represented by the capitalists does not exist here *Here coercion would ruin the whole cause* Prolonged educational work is what is required We have to give the peasant, who not only in our country but all over the world is a practical man and a realist, concrete examples to prove that the commune is the best possible thing.

Of course, nothing will come of it if hasty individuals go flitting to the villages from the cities, come there, make a speech, stir up a number of intellectual and at times unintellectual brawls, and then shake the dust from their feet and go their way. That sometimes happens. Instead of arousing respect, they arouse ridicule, and deservedly so.

On this question we must say that we encourage communes, but that they must be so organized *as to gain the confidence of the peasants.* And until then we are pupils of the peasants and not their teachers. Nothing is more stupid than when people who know nothing about agriculture and its specific features fling themselves on the village because they have heard of the advantages of socialized farming, are tired of city life and desire to work in agricultural districts—nothing is more stupid than when such people regard themselves as all-round teachers of the peasants. *Nothing is more stupid than the idea of applying coercion in economic relations with the middle peasant.*

The aim here is not to expropriate the middle peasant but to bear in mind the specific conditions in which the peasant lives, to learn from the peasant methods of transition to a better system, *and not to dare to domineer!* That is the rule we have to set ourselves. [*General applause.*] That is the rule we have endeavoured to set forth in our draft resolution, for in that respect, comrades, we have indeed sinned grievously. We ought not to be ashamed to confess it. We were inexperienced. Our very struggle against the exploiters was taken from experience. If we have sometimes been condemned on account of it, we are able to say: "Messieurs the capitalists, you have only yourselves to blame. If you had not offered such savage, senseless, insolent and desperate resistance, if you had not joined in an alliance with the bourgeoisie of the world, the revolution would have assumed more peaceful forms." Now that we have repulsed the savage attack on all sides, we may adopt other methods, because we are acting not as a circle, but as a party which is leading the millions. The millions cannot immediately understand a change of course, and so it frequently happens that blows aimed at the kulaks fall on the middle peasants. That is not surprising. It must only be understood that this is due to historical conditions which have now been outlived and that the new conditions and the new tasks in relation to this class demand a new psychology.

Our decrees on peasant farming are in the main correct. We have no grounds for renouncing a single one of them, or for regretting a single one of them. But while the decrees are right, *it is wrong to impose them on the peasantry by force.* That is not contained in a single decree. They are right inasmuch as they indicate the roads to follow, inasmuch as they are a call for practical measures. When we say, "Encourage associations," we are giving instructions which must be tested many times before the final *form* in which to put them into effect is found. When it is stated that we must strive to gain their voluntary consent, it means that the peasants must be convinced, and convinced in practice. They will not allow them-

selves to be convinced by mere words, and they are perfectly right It would be a bad thing if they allowed themselves to be convinced merely by decrees and agitational leaflets. If it were possible to reshape economic life in this way, such reshaping would not be worth a brass farthing It must first be demonstrated that such association is better, people must be united in such a way that they are actually united and are not at odds with each other—it must be proved that association is advantageous That is the way the peasant puts the question and that is the way our decrees put it If we have not been able to achieve that so far, there is nothing to be ashamed of and we must admit it frankly

We have so far accomplished only what is fundamental for every Socialist revolution—defeated the bourgeoisie That in the main has been accomplished, although an extremely difficult half year is beginning in *which the imperialists of the world will make a last attempt to crush us* We can now say without exaggeration that *they themselves understand that after this half-year their cause will be absolutely hopeless* Either they take advantage of our state of exhaustion and defeat us, an isolated country, or we prove to be the victors not merely in regard to our country alone In this half year, in which the food crisis has been aggravated by a transport crisis, and in which the imperialist powers are endeavouring to attack us on several fronts, our situation is an extremely difficult one But *this is the last difficult half year* We must continue to mobilize all our forces in the struggle against the external enemy, who is attacking us

But when we speak of the aims of our work in the rural districts, in spite of all the difficulties, and in spite of the fact that our experience has been wholly concerned with the immediate task of crushing the exploiters, we must remember, and never forget, that the tasks in the rural districts, in relation to the middle peasant, are entirely different

All the class conscious workers—from Petrograd, Ivanovo Voznesensk, or Moscow—who have been to the rural districts related examples of how a number of misunderstandings which appeared to be irremovable, and a number of conflicts which appeared to be very serious, were removed and mitigated when capable working men came forward and spoke, not in the language of books, but in a language understood by the muzhiks, when they spoke not as commanders who take the liberty of commanding without knowing anything of rural life, but as comrades, explaining the situation and appealing to their sentiments as toilers against the exploiters And by such comradely elucidation they accomplished what could not be accomplished by hundreds of others who conducted themselves like commanders and superiors

This spirit permeates the resolution we are now submitting to your attention

I have endeavoured in my brief report to dwell on the underlying principles and the general political significance of this resolution I have endeavoured to show—and I should like to think that I have shown—that

from the point of view of the interests of the revolution as a whole we are making no change of front, we are not changing the line. The Whiteguards and their henchmen are asserting, or will assert, that we are. Let them. It does not affect us. We are developing our aims in a most consistent manner. We must transfer our attention from the aim of crushing the bourgeoisie to the aim of adjusting the life of the middle peasant. We must live in peace with him. In a Communist society the middle peasant will be on our side when we mitigate and ameliorate his economic conditions. If to-morrow we could supply one hundred thousand first-class tractors, provide them with fuel, provide them with drivers—you know very well that this at present is a fantasy—the middle peasant would say: "I am for the Commune" (*i.e.*, for Communism). But in order to do that we must first defeat the international bourgeoisie, we must compel them to give us these tractors, or so develop our productive forces as to be able to provide them ourselves. That is the only way to regard the matter.

The peasant needs the industry of the towns; he cannot live without it, and it is in our hands. If we set about the task properly, the peasant will be grateful to us for bringing him these products, these implements and this culture from the towns. They will be brought to him not by exploiters, not by landlords, but by fellow-toilers, whom he values very highly, but values practically, for the actual help they give, at the same time rejecting —and rightly rejecting—all domineering and "dictation" from above.

First help, and then endeavour to win confidence. If you set about this matter correctly, if every step taken by every one of our groups in the uyezds, the volosts, the food detachments, and in every other organization is properly directed, if every step we take is carefully tested from this point of view, we shall gain the confidence of the peasants, and only then shall we be able to proceed farther. What we must now do is to help him and advise him. This will not be the orders of a commander, but the advice of a comrade. The peasant will then be entirely on our side.

This, comrades, is what is contained in our resolution, and this must be the decision of the Congress. If we adopt this, if it serves to determine the work of all our Party organizations, we shall cope with the second great task confronting us.

We have learnt how to overthrow the bourgeoisie, how to crush it, and we are proud of the fact. But how to regulate our relations with the millions of middle peasants, how to win their confidence, that we have not yet learnt—and we must frankly admit it. But we have understood the task, we have begun to tackle it, and we say in all confidence, with full knowledge and determination, that we shall cope with this task—and then Socialism will be absolutely invincible. [*Prolonged applause.*]

Published in 1919 in *The Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)*

LETTER TO THE PETROGRAD WORKERS ON AID TO THE EASTERN FRONT

TO THE WORKERS OF PETROGRAD

Comrades,

The situation on the Eastern Front has grown extremely worse. Today Kolchak took Botkinsky Zavod, Bugulma is on the verge of falling. Evidently Kolchak will advance still further.

The danger is grave.

Today, in the Council of People's Commissars, we are proposing a series of emergency measures in aid of the Eastern Front and are launching an intense propaganda campaign.

We beg the workers of Petrograd *to adopt every measure, to mobilize all forces* in aid of the Eastern Front.

There the soldier-workers will be able to feed themselves and send home food parcels in aid of their families. But the chief thing is that there the fate of the revolution is being decided.

By winning there, *we shall end the war*, for *there will be no more assistance to the Whites from abroad*. In the south, we are on the verge of victory. Forces cannot be withdrawn from the south until our victory there is complete.

Therefore, *aid the Eastern Front*!

Both the Soviets of Deputies and the trade unions must muster all their forces, must adopt every measure and aid the Eastern Front in every way.

I am confident, comrades, that the workers of Petrograd will set an example for the whole of Russia.

With Communist greetings,

LENIN

Moscow, April 10, 1919

Printed in the *Petrogradskaya Pravda* No. 81, April 12, 1919

THESES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS) IN CONNECTION WITH THE SITUATION ON THE EASTERN FRONT

Kolchak's victories on the Eastern Front are of the gravest danger to the Soviet Republic. All our energies must be bent to the extreme to smash Kolchak.

The Central Committee therefore instructs all Party organizations to concentrate all their efforts first and foremost on the following measures, which must be carried out by the Party organizations and, in particular, by the trade unions in order to enlist wider sections of the working class in the active defence of the country.

1. All-round support to the mobilization declared on April 11, 1919.

All the forces of the Party and the trade unions must be mobilized immediately so as to render the most energetic assistance to the mobilization decreed by the Council of People's Commissars on April 10, 1919, within the next few days, without the slightest delay.

The mobilized men must at once be made to see the active participation of the trade unions and to feel that they have the support of the working class.

In particular, it must be made clear to each and every mobilized man that his immediate dispatch to the front will mean an improvement in his food situation: firstly, owing to the better rations received by the soldiers in the grain producing front line zone; secondly, because of the fact that the food brought into the hungry provinces will be distributed among fewer people; thirdly, because of the broadly-organized sending of food parcels by Red Armymen in the front areas to their families at home.

The Central Committee demands of every Party and trade union organization a weekly report, however brief, of what it has done to help mobilization and the mobilized.

2. In the front areas, and especially in the Volga region, all trade union members must be armed to a man, and in the event of a shortage

of arms, they must be mobilized to a man to render various forms of aid to the Red Army, to replace casualties, etc

The action of towns like Pokrovsk, where the trade unions themselves decided to mobilize immediately 50 per cent of their members, should serve as an example The capitals and the large industrial centres must not lag behind Pokrovsk

The trade unions everywhere must, with their own forces and means, carry out a check registration of their members in order that all who are not absolutely indispensable at home may be sent to fight for the Volga and the Urals territory

3 The most serious attention must be paid to intensifying propaganda among those liable to mobilization, among the mobilized and among the Red Armymen The customary methods of propaganda—lectures, meetings, etc —are not enough, propaganda should be carried on among Red Armymen by workers, singly or in groups, barracks, Red Army units, and factories should be distributed among such groups of ordinary workers, members of trade unions The trade unions must institute a check to see that every one of their members takes part in house to house propaganda, distribution of leaflets and personal talks

4 All male office workers are to be replaced by women, for which purpose a new registration, both Party and trade union, shall be carried out

Special cards shall be introduced for all trade unionists and all office workers, indicating the part they are personally taking in assisting the Red Army

5 *Aid Bureaux* or *Committees of Assistance* are to be instituted immediately through the trade unions, factory committees, Party organizations, co operative societies, etc , local and central Their addresses shall be published The public shall be informed about them in the widest possible manner Every man liable to mobilization, every Red Armyman, and every person desirous of leaving for the South, for the Don or the Ukraine for food work should know that there is an aid bureau or a committee of assistance near and accessible to every worker and peasant where he may obtain advice or instruction, where contact with the military authorities will be facilitated for him, etc

It shall be the special task of these bureaux to aid the *supply of the Red Army* We could enlarge our army very considerably if we improved the supply of arms, clothing, etc And among the population there are still no inconsiderable quantities of arms which have been hidden or are not being utilized for the army There are still no inconsiderable factory stocks of goods of various kinds needed by the army, and they must be quickly found and dispatched to the army Military departments and army supply chiefs should receive the immediate, broad and effective assistance of the public This is a matter to which all energies must be devoted.

6. The wide enlistment of peasants, and especially of peasant youths in the non-agricultural provinces, for the ranks of the Red Army and for the formation of food detachments and food armies in the Don and the Ukraine should be organized through the trade unions.

This activity can and should be greatly extended; it will help both to assist the hungry population of the capitals and the non-agricultural provinces and to strengthen the Red Army.

7. As regards the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the line of the Party in the present situation is: to prison with those who assist Kolchak, whether deliberately or indeliberately. In our republic of working people we will not tolerate anybody who does not help us practically in the fight against Kolchak. But among the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries there are people who are desirous of rendering such help. Such people should be encouraged and given practical jobs, principally in the way of technical assistance to the Red Army in the rear, under stringent control.

The Central Committee appeals to all Party organizations and all trade unions to set to work in revolutionary style, and not confine themselves to the old stereotyped methods.

We can defeat Kolchak. We can defeat him quickly and completely, for our victories in the South and the international situation, which is daily improving and changing in our favour, guarantee our ultimate triumph.

We must bend all our efforts, display revolutionary energy, and Kolchak will be rapidly defeated. The Volga, the Urals and Siberia can be and must be defended and recaptured.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN
COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

Pravda No. 79,
April 12, 1919

BEWARE OF SPIES!

Death to spies!

The Whiteguards' advance on Petrograd makes it perfectly clear that throughout the front zone, in every large town, the Whites have a wide organization for espionage, treachery, the blowing up of bridges, the engineering of revolts in the rear and the murder of Communists and prominent members of the workers' organizations.

Every man to his post.

Everywhere vigilance must be redoubled and a series of measures conceived and stringently carried out for the tracking down of spies and White conspirators and their arrest.

It is incumbent on railway officials and political workers in all military units without exception in particular to redouble their precautions

All class-conscious workers and peasants must rise up in defence of the Soviet power and must fight the spies and Whiteguard traitors. Let every man be on the watch and in constant touch, organized on military lines, with the committees of the Party, with the Extraordinary Commission and with the most trusted and experienced comrades among the Soviet officials

V Ulyanov (Lenin)

CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' DEFENCE

F. Dzerzhinsky

PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Printed in *Pravda* No 116,
May 31, 1919

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL AND ITS PLACE IN HISTORY

The imperialists of the "Entente" countries are blockading Russia, are striving to cut off the Soviet Republic as a hotbed of infection from the capitalist world. These people, who boast about the "democracy" of their institutions, are so blinded by their hatred for the Soviet Republic that they fail to observe that they are making themselves ridiculous. Just think: the advanced, most civilized and "democratic" countries, armed to the teeth, enjoying unchallenged military sway over the whole world, are mortally afraid of the *ideological* infection coming from a ruined, starving, backward, and, as they assert even semi-savage country!

This contradiction alone is opening the eyes of the masses of the toilers in all countries and helps to expose the hypocrisy of the imperialists Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Wilson and their governments.

But it is not only the blindness of the capitalists in their hatred for the Soviets that is helping us, but also their mutual quarrels which induce them to put spokes in each other's wheel. They have entered into a veritable conspiracy of silence, for the thing they fear most of all is the spread of true information about the Soviet Republic in general, and its official documents in particular. However, the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, *Le Temps*, has published a report of the foundation in Moscow of the Third, Communist International.

For this we express to the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, to this leader of French chauvinism and imperialism, our most profound gratitude. We are prepared to send *Le Temps* an illuminated address expressing our appreciation of the effective and able assistance it is giving us.

The manner in which *Le Temps* compiled its report on the basis of our radio message clearly and fully reveals the motive that prompted this organ of the money-bags. It wanted to have a dig at Wilson, as if to say: Look at the people you want to enter into negotiations with! The wiseacres who write to the order of the money-bags failed to observe that their attempt to frighten Wilson with the bogey of the Bolsheviks is transformed in the eyes of the masses of the toilers into an advertisement

for the Bolsheviks. Once again we express our most profound gratitude to the organ of the French millionaires!

The Third International was formed in such a world situation that no prohibitions, no petty and miserable tricks of the "Entente" imperialists, or of the lackeys of capitalism, such as the Scheidemanns in Germany and the Renners in Austria, can hinder news about this International and sympathy toward it from spreading among the working class of the whole world. This situation was created by the proletarian revolution, which daily and hourly is manifestly growing everywhere. This situation was created by the *Soviet* movement among the masses of the toilers, which has already achieved such force that it has become really *international*.

The First International (1864-72) laid the foundation of the international organization of the workers in order to prepare for their revolutionary onslaught on capital. The Second International (1889-1914) was the international organization of the proletarian movement which grew in *breadth*, and this entailed a temporary drop in the revolutionary level, a temporary increase in the strength of opportunism, which, in the end, led to the disgraceful collapse of this International.

The Third International was actually created in 1918, when the long process of struggle against opportunism and social chauvinism, particularly during the war, led to the formation of Communist Parties in a number of countries. Officially, the Third International was formed at its first congress, in March 1919, in Moscow. And the most characteristic feature of this International, is its mission to carry out, to put into practice, the behests of Marxism, and to achieve the century old ideals of Socialism and the working-class movement—this very characteristic feature of the Third International manifested itself immediately in that the new, Third, "International Workingmen's Association" *has already begun to coincide*, to a certain extent, with the *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*.

The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian, international struggle for Socialism.

The Second International marked the epoch in which the soil was prepared for a broad, mass, widespread movement in a number of countries.

The Third International gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, purged it of its opportunist, social chauvinist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dross, and *has begun to effect* the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The international alliance of the Parties which are leading the most revolutionary movement in the world, the movement of the proletariat for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, now has a basis of unprecedented firmness: several *Soviet republics*, which on an international scale are putting into effect the dictatorship of the proletariat, its victory over capitalism.

The world-historical significance of the Third, Communist International lies in that it has begun to put into practice Marx's greatest slogan, the slogan which sums up the century-old development of Socialism and the working-class movement, the slogan which is expressed by the term: dictatorship of the proletariat.

This prophecy of genius, this theory of genius is becoming a reality.

This Latin phrase has now been translated into the languages of all the peoples of contemporary Europe—more than that, into all the languages of the world.

A new epoch in world history has begun.

Mankind is throwing off the last form of slavery: capitalist, or wage-slavery.

Emancipating itself from slavery, mankind is for the first time passing to real liberty.

How is it that the first country to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, to organize a Soviet Republic, was one of the most backward of European countries? We shall not be mistaken if we say that it is precisely this contradiction between the backwardness of Russia and its "leap" to the higher form of democracy, its leap across bourgeois democracy to Soviet, or proletarian democracy, that it was precisely this contradiction that was one of the reasons (apart from the burden of opportunist habits and philistine prejudices that oppressed the majority of the leaders of Socialism) which, in the West, particularly hindered, or retarded, the understanding of the role of the Soviets.

The masses of the workers all over the world instinctively appreciated the significance of the Soviets as a weapon in the struggle of the proletariat and as the form of the proletarian state. But the "leaders" who were corrupted by opportunism continued and now continue to worship bourgeois democracy, calling it "democracy" in general.

Is it surprising that the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat first of all revealed the "contradiction" between the backwardness of Russia and its "leap" *across* bourgeois democracy? It would have been surprising had history granted us the establishment of a *new* form of democracy *without* a number of contradictions.

If any Marxist, in fact if any person who is familiar with modern science were asked whether the even, or harmoniously proportionate transition of different capitalist countries to the dictatorship of the proletariat was probable, he would undoubtedly answer in the negative. Neither evenness, nor harmony, nor proportion ever existed in the world of capitalism; nor could it exist. Each country developed with particular prominence, first one, and then another aspect, or feature, or group of qualities of capitalism and of the working-class movement. The process of development was uneven.

When France was making her great bourgeois revolution and rousing the whole continent of Europe to a historically new life, England was at

the head of the counter revolutionary coalition, although she was capitalistically much more developed than France And the English working class movement of that epoch brilliantly anticipated much of subsequent Marxism

When England was giving the world the first, broad, really mass, politically formed, proletarian revolutionary movement, namely, Chartism, bourgeois revolutions, most of them weak ones, were taking place on the continent of Europe, and in France, the first great civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie broke out The bourgeoisie in the various countries defeated the various national units of the proletariat one by one, and in different ways

England served as an example of a country in which, as Engels expressed it, the bourgeoisie, side by side with a bourgeois aristocracy, created the most bourgeois upper stratum of the proletariat For several decades the advanced capitalist country proved to be backward in regard to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat France, as it were, exhausted the strength of the proletariat in two heroic uprisings of the working class against the bourgeoisie, in 1848 and in 1871, which were of unusually great world historical significance Then hegemony in the International of the working-class movement passed to Germany, in the seventies of the nineteenth century, when Germany was economically behind England and France And when Germany ultimately surpassed these two countries economically, *i e*, in the second decade of the twentieth century, a handful of arch scoundrels, the filthiest blackguards, who had sold themselves to the capitalists—from Scheidemann and Noske to David and Legien—the most revolting executioners from the ranks of the workers in the service of the monarchy and of the counter revolutionary bourgeoisie, were found to be at the head of the Marxist workers' party of Germany, which had been a model for the whole world

World history is undeviatingly marching toward the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it is far from marching toward it by smooth, simple and straight paths

When Karl Kautsky was still a Marxist and not the renegade of Marxism that he became when he began to champion unity with the Scheidemanns and bourgeois democracy in opposition to Soviet or proletarian democracy, he, in the very beginning of the twentieth century, wrote an article entitled 'The Slavs and Revolution " In this article he enunciated the historical conditions that would make possible the transition of hegemony in the international revolutionary movement to the Slavs

This is what has happened For a time—it goes without saying that it is only for a short time—hegemony in the revolutionary, proletarian International has passed to the Russians in the same way as at various periods in the nineteenth century it was enjoyed by the English, then by the French, and then by the Germans

I have had occasion more than once to say that, compared with the

advanced countries, it was easier for the Russians to *start* the great proletarian revolution, but that it will be more difficult for them to *continue* it and carry it to complete victory, in the sense of organizing complete Socialist society.

It was easier for us to start, firstly, because the unusual—for Europe of the twentieth century—political backwardness of the tsarist monarchy stimulated a revolutionary attack by the masses of unusual force. Secondly, Russia's backwardness in a peculiar way merged the proletarian revolution against the bourgeoisie with the peasant revolution against the landlords. We started with this in October 1917, and we would not have achieved victory so easily then had we not started with this. As long ago as 1856, Marx, in speaking of Prussia, pointed to the possibility of a peculiar combination of proletarian revolution and peasant war. Since the beginning of 1905, the Bolsheviks have advocated the idea of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Thirdly, the 1905 Revolution did ever so much to assist the political education of the masses of workers and peasants in the sense of making their vanguard familiar with "the last word" in Socialism in the West, as well as in the sense of the revolutionary *action* of the masses. Without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905 the revolutions of 1917—the bourgeois, February Revolution, as well as the proletarian, October Revolution—would have been impossible. Fourthly, the geographical conditions of Russia permitted her to hold out against the superior external forces of the capitalist, advanced countries longer than other countries. Fifthly, the peculiar relations between the proletariat and the peasantry facilitated the transition from the bourgeois revolution to the Socialist revolution, facilitated the spread of the influence of the urban proletarians over the semi-proletarian, the poorest strata of the toilers in the rural districts. Sixthly, the long schooling in strike struggles and the experience of the European mass working-class movement facilitated the rise—in the midst of a profound and rapidly intensified revolutionary situation—of a peculiar form of proletarian revolutionary organization such as the *Soviets*.

This list is incomplete of course; but for the time being it will suffice.

Soviet or proletarian democracy was born in Russia. The second step of world-historical importance was taken after the Paris Commune. The proletarian-peasant Soviet Republic proved to be the first stable Socialist republic in the world. As *a new type of state* it cannot die now. It no longer stands alone.

For the purpose of continuing the work of building Socialism, for the purpose of completing the work of construction, a very great deal is still required. The Soviet republics of the more cultured countries, in which the proletariat has greater weight and influence, have every chance of overtaking Russia as soon as they take the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The bankrupt Second International is now dying and decomposing alive Actually, it is playing the role of lackey to the international bourgeoisie It is a really yellow International Its most prominent ideological leaders, like Kautsky, laud *bourgeois* democracy and call it "democracy" in general, or—what is still more stupid and still more crude—"pure democracy"

Bourgeois democracy is obsolete, and so also is the Second International which performed historically necessary and useful work when the problem of training the masses of the workers within the framework of this bourgeois democracy was on the order of the day.

The most democratic bourgeois republic was never, nor could ever be anything else than a machine with which capital suppressed the toilers, an instrument of the political rule of capital, of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie The democratic bourgeois republic promised the rule of the majority, it proclaimed the rule of the majority, but it could never put this into effect as long as the private ownership of the land and other means of production existed

In the bourgeois-democratic republic "freedom" was really freedom *for the rich* The proletarians and toiling peasants could and should have utilized it for the purpose of preparing their forces for overthrowing capital, for overcoming bourgeois democracy, *in fact*, however, as a general rule, the masses of the toilers were unable to make use of democracy under capitalism

For the first time in history Soviet or proletarian democracy created *democracy* for the masses, for the toilers, for the workers and small peasants

Never before in history has there been a state representing the *majority* of the population, the *actual* rule of the majority, such as is the Soviet state

It suppresses the "freedom" of the exploiters and their accomplices, it deprives them of the "freedom" to exploit, the "freedom" to make profit out of starvation, the "freedom" to fight for the restoration of the rule of capital, the "freedom" to come to an agreement with the foreign bourgeoisie in opposition to the workers and peasants in their own country

Let the Kautskys champion such freedom In order to do that one must be a renegade of Marxism, a renegade of Socialism

Nothing has so strikingly expressed the bankruptcy of the ideological leaders of the Second International like Hilferding and Kautsky as their complete inability to understand the significance of Soviet or proletarian democracy, its relation to the Paris Commune, its place in history, its necessity as the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat

No 74 of *Die Freiheit*, the organ of "Independent" (read philistine, petty bourgeois) German Social Democracy, of February 11, 1919, published a "Manifesto to the Revolutionary Proletariat of Germany"

This manifesto is signed by the Executive Committee of the Party and by its members in the "National Assembly," the German "*Uchredilka*."*

This manifesto accuses the Scheidemanns of striving to abolish the *Soviets*, and it proposes—don't laugh!—that the Soviets be *combined* with the *Uchredilka*, that the Soviets be granted certain state rights, a certain place in the Constitution.

To reconcile, to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat! How simple! What a brilliantly philistine idea!

The only pity is that this has been tried already in Russia, under Kerensky, by the united Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, these petty-bourgeois democrats who imagine that they are Socialists.

Those who have read Marx and have failed to understand that in capitalist society, at every acute moment, at every serious conflict of classes, only the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible, have understood nothing about the economic or the political doctrines of Marx.

But the brilliantly philistine idea of Hilferding, Kautsky and Co. of peacefully combining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat must be dealt with separately if the economic and political absurdities heaped up in this very remarkable and comical manifesto of February 11 are to be plumbed to the depths. But this will have to be put off for another article.

Communist International No 1,
May 1, 1919

* "*Uchredilka*"—Russian term of derision for the Constituent Assembly.—*Ed.*

GREETINGS TO THE HUNGARIAN WORKERS

Comrades, the news we have been receiving from the Hungarian Soviet leaders fills us with delight and joy. The Soviet power has been in existence in Hungary for only a little over two months, yet as regards organization the Hungarian proletariat already seems to have excelled us. That is understandable, for in Hungary the general cultural level of the population is higher, then the proportion of the industrial workers to the total population is immeasurably greater (Budapest with its three million of the eight million population of present-day Hungary), and, lastly, the transition to the Soviet system, to the dictatorship of the proletariat, in Hungary was incomparably easier and more peaceful.

This last circumstance is particularly important. The majority of the Socialist leaders in Europe, both the social-chauvinists and the Kautsky trend, have become so much a prey to purely middle class prejudices, fostered by decades of relatively "peaceful" capitalism and bourgeois parliamentarism, that they are unable to understand what Soviet rule and the dictatorship of the proletariat mean The proletariat cannot perform its epoch making emancipatory mission unless it removes these leaders from its path, unless it sweeps them out of its way These people believed, or half believed, the bourgeois lies about the Soviet regime in Russia and were unable to distinguish the essence of the new, proletarian democracy—democracy for the working people, Socialist democracy, as embodied in Soviet rule—from bourgeois democracy, which they slavishly worship and call "pure democracy" or "democracy" in general

These purblind people stuffed with bourgeois prejudices did not understand the epoch making swing from bourgeois to proletarian democracy, from bourgeois to proletarian dictatorship They confused certain peculiarities of Russian Soviet power, of Russian history and its development with Soviet power as an international phenomenon.

The Hungarian proletarian revolution is helping even the blind to see. The form of transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary is altogether different from that in Russia· the voluntary resignation of the bourgeois government, and the instantaneous restoration of the unity of the working class, the unity of Socialism on a *Communist program*. This makes the essence of Soviet rule all the clearer. no rule supported by the working people, headed by the proletariat, is row pos-

sible anywhere in the world except Soviet rule, except the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This dictatorship of the proletariat implies the ruthlessly severe, swift and resolute use of force to crush the resistance of the exploiters, of the capitalists, landlords and their underlings. He who does not understand that is not a revolutionary and must be removed from the post of leader or adviser of the proletariat.

But the essence of the proletarian dictatorship does not lie in force alone, or even mainly in force. Its quintessence is the organization and discipline of the advanced detachment of the working people, of their vanguard, their sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build Socialism, to abolish the division of society into classes, to make all members of society working people, to remove the basis for any kind of exploitation of man by man. This object cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to Socialism, because the reorganization of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois dealings can be overcome only by a long and stubborn struggle. That is why Marx spoke of a long period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism.

Throughout the whole of this transition period resistance to the revolution will be offered both by the capitalists, as well as by their numerous myrmidons among the bourgeois intelligentsia, who will resist consciously, and by the vast mass of the working people, including the peasants, who are overstuffed with petty-bourgeois habits and traditions, and who for the most part will resist unconsciously. Vacillations among these strata are inevitable. As a toiler the peasant gravitates towards Socialism, and prefers the dictatorship of the workers to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. As a seller of grain, the peasant gravitates towards the bourgeoisie, to free trade, *i.e.*, back to the "habitual," old, "primordial" capitalism.

What is needed is the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of one class, its strength of organization and discipline, its centralized power based on all the achievements of the culture, science and technology of capitalism, its proletarian affinity to the mentality of every working individual, its authority over the scattered, less developed labouring man of the countryside or of petty industry, who is less firm in politics, to enable the proletariat to *win the following* of the peasantry and of all petty-bourgeois strata in general. Here phrasemongering about "democracy" in general, about "unity" or the "unity of the labouring democracy," about the "equality" of all "men of labour," and so on and so forth—phraseology for which the petty-bourgeoisified social-chauvinists and Kautskyites have such a predilection—is of no use whatever. Phrasemongering only confuses the sight, blinds the mind and confirms the

old stupidity, conservatism, and routine of capitalism, parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy

The abolition of classes requires a long, difficult and stubborn *class struggle*, which, *after* the overthrow of the power of capital, *after* the destruction of the bourgeois state, *after* the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, *does not disappear* (as the vulgar representatives of the old Socialism and the old Social Democracy imagine), but merely changes its forms and in many respects becomes more fierce

By means of a class struggle against the resistance of the bourgeoisie, against the conservatism, routine, irresolution and vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie the proletariat must uphold its power, strengthen its organizing influence, "neutralize" those strata which fear to leave the bourgeoisie and which follow the proletariat too hesitantly, and consolidate the new discipline, the comradely discipline of the working people, their firm tie with the proletariat, their union around the proletariat, that new discipline, that new basis of social ties which replaces the feudal discipline of the Middle Ages and the discipline of starvation, the discipline of the "free" wage slave under capitalism

In order to abolish classes a period of the dictatorship of one class is needed, the dictatorship, namely, of that one of the oppressed classes, which is capable not only of overthrowing the exploiters, not only of ruthlessly crushing their resistance, but also of breaking intellectually with the entire bourgeois democratic ideology, with all the petty bourgeois phrasemongering about liberty and equality in general (in reality, this phrasemongering implies, as Marx pointed out long ago, the "liberty and equality" of the *commodity owners*, the "liberty and equality" of the *capitalist and the worker*)

More, only that one of the oppressed classes is capable of abolishing classes by its dictatorship which has been schooled, united, trained and steeled by decades of the strike and political struggle against capital—only that class which has imbibed all the urban, industrial, big capitalistic culture has the determination and ability to protect it, preserve it and further develop all its achievements, and make them available to all the people, to all the working folk—only that class which is able to stand all the hardships, trials, privations and great sacrifices which history inevitably imposes upon those who break with the past and boldly force a road for themselves to a new future—only that class whose finest members are filled with hatred and contempt for everything which is petty bourgeois and philistine, for those qualities which flourish so profusely among the petty bourgeoisie, the minor employees and the "intelligentsia"—only that class which has been through the "hardening school of labour" and is able to inspire respect for its industriousness in every working individual and every honest man

Comrades, Hungarian workers, you have set the world a better example than even Soviet Russia by having been able to unite at once all Social

ists on the platform of a genuine proletarian dictatorship. You are now faced with the most noble and difficult task of holding your own in a rigorous war against the Entente. Be firm. If vacillation should manifest itself among the Socialists who yesterday gave their adherence to you, to the dictatorship of the proletariat, or among the petty bourgeoisie, suppress it ruthlessly. Shooting—that is the lawful fate of the coward in war.

You are waging the only legitimate, just and truly revolutionary war, a war of the oppressed against the oppressors, a war of the working people against the exploiters, a war for the victory of Socialism. All honest members of the working class all over the world are on your side. Every month brings the world proletarian revolution nearer.

Be firm! Victory will be yours!

May 27, 1919

Pravda No. 115,
May 29, 1919

A GREAT BEGINNING

THE HEROISM OF THE WORKERS IN THE REAR. ON "COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS"

The press reports many examples of the heroism of the Red Armymen. In the fight against the Kolchakites, Denikinites and other forces of the landlords and capitalists, the workers and peasants very often displayed miracles of bravery and endurance, defending the gains of the Socialist revolution The overcoming of guerilla methods, weariness and indiscipline is a slow and difficult process, but it is making headway in spite of everything. The heroism of the toiling masses who are voluntarily making sacrifices for the cause of the victory of Socialism—this is the foundation of the new, comradely discipline in the Red Army, the foundation of its regeneration, consolidation and growth.

The heroism of the workers in the rear is no less worthy of attention. In this connection, the *Communist subbotniks* organized by the workers on their own initiative are positively of enormous significance. Evidently, this is only a beginning, but it is a beginning of unusually great importance It is the beginning of a revolution that is much more difficult, more material, more radical and more decisive than the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for it is a victory over personal conservativeness, indiscipline, petty bourgeois egoism, a victory over the habits that accursed capitalism left as a heritage to the worker and peasant. Only when *this* victory is consolidated will the new social discipline, Socialist discipline, be created, only then will a reversion to capitalism become impossible and Communism become really invincible.

The *Pravda* in its issue of May 17 published an article by Comrade A. J. entitled· "Work in a Revolutionary Style (A Communist Sabbath)" This article is so important that we reproduce it here in full.

WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY STYLE

(A Communist Sabbath)

"The letter of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party on working in a *revolutionary style* gave a powerful impetus to the Communist organizations and to the Communists. The general wave of enthusiasm carried many Communist railway workers to the front; but the majority of them could not leave their responsible posts and had to seek new forms of working in a revolutionary style. Reports from the localities pointing to the tardiness with which the work of mobilization was proceeding and to the prevalence of red tape compelled the Moscow-Kazan Railway sub-district to turn its attention to the prevailing methods of railway administration. It transpired that owing to the shortage of labour and the tardy rate at which the work was being done urgent orders and repairs to locomotives were being held up. At a general meeting of Communists and sympathizers belonging to the Moscow-Kazan Railway sub-district held on May 7, the question was raised of passing from words to deeds in helping to achieve victory over Kolchak. The following resolution was moved:

"'In view of the grave internal and external situation, the Communists and sympathizers, in order to gain the upper hand over the class enemy, must spur themselves on again and deduct an extra hour from their rest, *i.e.*, lengthen their workday by one hour, accumulate these extra hours and put in six extra hours of manual labour on Saturday for the purpose of creating material value of immediate worth. Being of the opinion that Communists should not stint their health and life for the gains of the revolution, this work should be performed gratis. *Communist Sabbaths* to be introduced throughout the sub-district and to continue until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved.'

"After some hesitation, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

"On Saturday, May 10, at 6 p.m., the Communists and sympathizers turned up to work like soldiers, formed ranks, and without fuss or bustle were taken by the foremen to their various jobs.

"The results of working *in a revolutionary style are evident.* The accompanying table gives the place of work and the character of the work performed.

"The total value of the work performed at ordinary rates of pay is Rbls. 5,000,000; calculated at overtime rates it would be fifty per cent higher.

Place of work	Character of work performed	Number employed	No. hours worked: Per person	No. hours worked: Total	Work performed
Moscow. Main locomotive shops	Loading materials for the line, jigs and fixtures for repairing locomotives and car parts for Perovo, Murom, Alatyr and Syzran	48	5	240	Loaded 7,500 poods. Unloaded 1,800 poods
		21	3	63	
		5	4	20	
Moscow. Passenger depot	Complex current repairs to locomotives	26	5	130	Repairs done on $1\frac{1}{2}$ locomotives
Moscow. Sorting station	Current repairs to locomotives	24	6	144	2 locomotives completed and parts to be repaired dismantled on 4
Moscow. Car department	Current repairs to passenger cars	12	6	72	2 third class cars
Perovo. Main car workshops	Car repairs and minor repairs on Saturday and Sunday	46	5	230	12 box cars and 2 flat cars
		23	5	115	
	Total	205	—	1,014	4 locomotives and 16 cars completed and 9,300 poods loaded and unloaded

"The productivity of labour on loading cars was 270 per cent higher than that of regular workers. The productivity of labour on other jobs was approximately the same.

"Jobs (urgent) which had been held up for periods ranging from seven days to three months owing to the shortage of labour and to red tape were put through.

"The work was performed in spite of the state of disrepair (easily remedied) of accessories, as a result of which certain groups were held up from thirty to forty minutes.

"The foremen who were placed in charge of the work could not keep pace with the men in finding new jobs for them, and perhaps it was only a slight exaggeration when an old foreman said that

the track of snow, and the Communist nuclei at many goods stations patrol the stations at night to prevent the stealing of goods. But all this work was casual and unsystematic. The new thing introduced by the comrades on the Moscow Kazan line is that they are making this work systematic and permanent. The Moscow-Kazan comrades say in their resolution, 'until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved,' and therein lies the significance of their work. They are lengthening the workday of every Communist and sympathizer by one hour for the whole duration of the war, simultaneously, they are displaying exemplary productivity of labour.

"This example has called forth, and *is bound to* call forth, further emulation. A general meeting of the Communists and sympathizers on the Alexandrovsky Railway, after discussing the military situation and the resolution adopted by the comrades on the Moscow Kazan Railway, resolved 1) to introduce 'subbotniks' for the Communists and sympathizers on the Alexandrovsky Railway, the first subbotnik to take place on May 17; 2) to organize the Communists and sympathizers in exemplary brigades which must show the workers how to work and what can really be done with the present materials and tools, and in the present food situation.

"The Moscow Kazan comrades say that their example has created a great impression and that they expect a large number of *non party* workers to turn up next Saturday. At the time these lines are being written the Communists have not yet started working overtime in the Alexandrovsky workshops, but as soon as the rumour spread that they were to do so the masses of the non-party workers bestirred themselves and said: 'We did not know yesterday, otherwise we would have got ready and would have worked as well!' 'We shall certainly come next Saturday,' we hear on all sides. The impression created by work of this sort is very great.

"The example set by the Moscow-Kazan comrades should be emulated by all the Communist nuclei in the rear; not only the Communist nuclei in the Moscow Junction, but the whole Party organization in Russia. In the rural districts also, the Communist nuclei should primarily set to work to till the fields of Red Army-men and help their families.

"The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line finished their first Communist subbotnik by singing the 'Internationale.' If the Communist organizations throughout Russia follow this example and consistently apply it, the Russian Soviet Republic will successfully pass through the coming severe months to the mighty strains of the 'Internationale' sung by all the working people of the republic....

"To work, comrades Communists!"

On May 23, 1919, *Pravda* reported the following:

> *"The first Communist 'subbotnik' on the Alexandrovsky Railway took place on May 17. In accordance with a resolution adopted by their general meeting, ninety-eight Communists and sympathizers worked five hours overtime gratis, receiving in return only the right to purchase a second dinner, and, as manual labourers, half a pound of bread to go with their dinner."*

Although the work was poorly prepared and organized the *productivity of labour was from two to three times higher than usual.*

Here are a few examples.

Five turners turned eighty spindles in four hours. The rate of output is 213 per cent of the ordinary.

Twenty labourers in four hours collected scrap materials of a total weight of 600 poods, and seventy laminated car springs, each weighing $3^{1}/_{2}$ poods, making a total of 850 poods. Productivity, 300 per cent of the ordinary.

> "The comrades explain this by the fact that ordinarily their work is dull and uninteresting, whereas here they worked with a will and with enthusiasm. Now, however, they will be ashamed to turn out less in regular working hours than they did at the Communist subbotnik.
>
> "Now many non-party workers say that they would like to take part in the subbotniks. The locomotive brigades are challenging each other to take locomotives from the 'cemetery', repair them and set them going during a subbotnik.
>
> "It is reported that similar subbotniks are to be organized on the Vyazma line."

How the work is done at these Communist subbotniks is described by Comrade A. Dyachenko in an article in *Pravda* of June 7, entitled "Notes of a Subbotnik Worker." We quote the main passages from this article.

> "It was with great joy that I gathered with my comrades to earn my subbotnik 'standing' on the decision of the railway sub-district of the Party, and for a time, for a few hours, to give my head a rest and my muscles a bit of exercise. . . . We were told off to the railway carpenter shop. When we got there we found a number of our people. We exchanged greetings, engaged in banter for a bit, counted up our forces and found that there were thirty of us. . . . In front of us lay a 'monster,' a steam boiler weighing no less than six or seven hundred poods; our job was to 'shift'

it a distance of a half or a third of a verst, to its base. We began to have our doubts . . . However, we started on the job. Some comrades placed wooden rollers under the boiler, attached two ropes to it, and we began to tug away. . . . The boiler gave way reluctantly, but at length it budged. We were delighted After all, there were so few of us ... For two weeks this boiler had resisted the efforts of thrice our number of non Communist workers and nothing could make it budge until we tackled it. . . . We worked for an hour, strenuously, rhythmically, to the command of our 'gang-boss,'—'one, two, three,' and the boiler kept on rolling Suddenly there was confusion, and a number of our comrades went tumbling on to the ground in the funniest fashion. The rope 'let them down'. . . . A moment's delay, and a new rope was made fast. . . . Evening. It was getting dark, but we had yet to overcome a small hillock, and then our job would be done. Our arms ached, our palms burned, we were hot and pulled for all we were worth—and making headway. The 'manager' stood round and somewhat shamed by our success, clutched at a rope 'Lend a hand, it's time you did!' A Red Armyman was watching our labours, in his hands he held a concertina What was he thinking? Who were these people? Why should they work on Saturday when everybody was at home? I solved his riddle and said to him 'Comrade, play us a jolly tune. We are not ordinary officials, we are real Communists. Don't you see how fast the work is going under our hands? We are not lazy, we are pulling for all we are worth!' In response, the Red Armyman carefully put his concertina on the ground and hastened to grab at a rope end

"Suddenly Comrade U struck up the opening bars of 'Dubinushka' in an excellent tenor voice and we all joined in the refrain of this labour chanty *'Eh dubinushka, ukhnem, podyernyem, podyernyem. . .* '

"Unaccustomed to the work, our muscles were weary, our shoulders ached, our backs . . . but to morrow was a free day, our day of rest, and we would be able to get all the sleep we wanted The goal was near, and after a little hesitation our 'monster' rolled almost right up to the base. 'Put some boards under; raise it on the base!'—and let the boiler do the work that has long been expected of it. We went off in a crowd to the 'club room' of the local nucleus. The room was brightly lit, the walls were decorated with posters; rifles were stacked around the room After lustily singing the 'Internationale' we enjoyed a glass of tea and 'rum,' and even bread. This treat, given us by the local comrades, was very welcome after our arduous toil. We took a hearty farewell of our comrades and lined up The strains of revolutionary songs echoed through the slumbering streets in the silence of the night and our

up' against some tyres and 'sipping' hot tea. The May night was somewhat fresh, and the new moon shone beautifully like a gleaming sickle in the sky People were laughing and joking.

"'Knock off, Comrade G, thirteen cars are enough!'

"But Comrade G. was not satisfied.

"We finished our tea, sang our song of triumph, and marched to the exit. . . ."

The movement in favour of organizing "Communist subbotniks" is not confined to Moscow *Pravda* of June 6 reported the following:

> "The first Communist subbotnik in Tver took place on May 31. One hundred and twenty eight Communists worked on the railway In three and a half hours they loaded and unloaded fourteen cars, repaired three locomotives, cut up ten sazhens of firewood* and performed other work The productivity of labour of the skilled Communist workers was thirteen times above the ordinary."

Again, on June 8 we read in *Pravda*:

COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS

> "Saratov, June 5. In response to the appeal of their Moscow comrades, the Communist railway workers here at a general Party meeting resolved to work five hours overtime on Saturdays without pay in order to assist the national economy"

* * *

I have given the information about the Communist subbotniks in the fullest and most detailed manner because in this we undoubtedly see one of the most important aspects of Communist construction, to which our press pays insufficient attention, and which all of us have as yet failed to appreciate properly.

Less political fireworks and more attention to the simplest but vital facts of Communist construction, taken from and tested by life—this is the slogan which all of us, our writers, agitators, propagandists, organizers, etc, should repeat unceasingly.

It was natural and inevitable in the first period after the proletarian revolution that we should be engaged more on the main and fundamental task of overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie, of vanquishing the exploiters, of crushing their conspiracies (like the "slave owners' conspiracy" to surrender Petrograd, in which all, from the Black-Hundreds and Constitutional Democrats to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolu-

---

* About seventy feet of logs —*Ed*

tionaries, were involved). But simultaneously with this task, another task comes to the front with equal inevitability and more imperatively as time passes, *viz.*, the more material task of positive, Communist construction, the creation of new economic relations, of a new society.

As I have had occasion to point out more than once, particularly in the speech I delivered at the Meeting of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies on March 12, the dictatorship of the *proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force.* The economic foundation of this revolutionary force, the guarantee of its virility and its success is in the fact that the proletariat represents and carries out a higher type of social organization of labour compared with capitalism. This is the essence. This is the source of the strength and the guarantee of the inevitable complete triumph of Communism.

The serf organization of social labour rested on the discipline of the stick, while the toilers, who were robbed and tyrannized over by a handful of landlords, were extremely ignorant and downtrodden. The capitalist organization of social labour rested on the discipline of starvation, and, notwithstanding all the progress of bourgeois culture and bourgeois democracy, the vast masses of the toilers in the most advanced, civilized and democratic republics remained an ignorant and downtrodden mass of wage-slaves, or oppressed peasants, robbed and tyrannized over by a handful of capitalists. The Communist organization of social labour, the first step towards which is Socialism, rests, and will do so more and more as time goes on, on the free and conscious discipline of the very toilers who have thrown off the yoke of the landlords and capitalists.

This new discipline does not drop from heaven, nor is it born out of pious wishes; it grows out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production, and out of this alone. Without this it is impossible. And the vehicle, or the channel, of these material conditions is a definite historical class, created, organized, consolidated, trained, educated and hardened by large-scale capitalism. This class is the proletariat.

If we translate the Latin, scientific, historical-philosophical term "dictatorship of the proletariat" into more simple language, it means just the following:

Only a definite class, namely, that of the urban and industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the toilers and exploited in the struggle for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, in the process of this overthrow, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, Socialist social system, in the whole struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (We will observe in parenthesis that the only scientific difference between Socialism and Communism is that the first word implies the first stage of the new society that is arising out of capitalism; the second implies the higher, the next stage.)

The mistake the "Berne,"* yellow International commits is that it leaders accept the class struggle and the leading role of the proletaria only in words and are afraid to think it out to its logical conclusion, the are afraid of the very conclusion which particularly terrifies the bourgeoi sie, and which is absolutely unacceptable to it They are afraid to admi that the dictatorship of the proletariat is *also* a period of the class struggle which is inevitable as long as classes exist, and which changes in form being particularly fierce and particularly peculiar in the first perio after the overthrow of capital The proletariat does not cease the clas struggle after it has captured political power, but continues it unti classes are abolished—of course, under other circumstances, in anothe form and by other means

What does the "abolition of classes" mean? All those who call them selves Socialists recognize this as the ultimate goal of Socialism, bu by no means all ponder over its significance Classes are large group of people which differ from each other by the place they occupy in a histor ically definite system of social production, by their relation (in mos cases fixed and formulated in laws) to the means of production, by thei role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimen sions and method of acquiring the share of social wealth that they obtain Classes are groups of people one of which may appropriate the labou of another owing to the different places they occupy in the definite systen of social economy.

Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landlords and capitalists, not enough to abolish *their* property, it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownershi of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers This is a very long process In order to achieve it an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces, it is necessary to overcome the resistance (frequently passive which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small production, it is necessary to over come the enormous force of habit and conservativeness which are con nected with these survivals

The assumption that all "toilers" are equally capable of doing this work would be an empty phrase, or the illusion of an antediluvian, pre Marxian Socialist, for this ability does not come of itself, but grows historically, and grows *only* out of the material conditions of large scale capitalist production The proletariat *alone* possesses this ability at the

* *The "Berne yellow International*—synonymous of the Second International which split up into separate social chauvinistic parties at the outbreak of the first World War (1914 18) and ceased to exist as an international organization The first conference, at which the Second International was officially restored after the close of the war, was held in February 1919 in Berne, Switzerland —*Ed*

beginning of the road leading from capitalism to Socialism. It is capable of fulfilling the gigantic task that lies on this road, first, because it is the strongest and most advanced class in civilized society; second, because in the most developed countries it constitutes the majority of the population, and third, because in backward capitalist countries like Russia, the majority of the population consists of semi-proletarians, *i.e.*, of people who regularly live in a proletarian way part of the year, who regularly eke out their livelihood in part as wage workers in capitalist enterprises.

Those who try to solve the problem of the transition from capitalism to Socialism on the basis of general phrases about liberty, equality, democracy in general, the equality of labour democracy, etc. (as Kautsky, Martov and other heroes of the Berne yellow International do), thereby only reveal their petty-bourgeois, philistine natures and slavishly follow in the ideological wake of the bourgeoisie. The correct solution of this problem can be found only by concretely studying the specific relations between the specific class which has captured political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole of the non-proletarian and also semi-proletarian mass of the toiling population—relations which are not established in fantastically-harmonious "ideal" conditions, but in the real conditions of the furious and many-sided resistance of the bourgeoisie.

The overwhelming majority of the population—and certainly of the toiling population—of any capitalist country, including Russia, has a thousand times experienced on its own back and on that of its kith and kin the yoke of capitalism, the robbery and every sort of tyranny of capitalism. The imperialist war, *i.e.*, the slaughter of ten million people in order to decide whether British or German capital is to attain supremacy in plundering the whole world, intensified, expanded and deepened this experience to an unusual degree and compelled the people to realize it. Hence the inevitable sympathy for the proletariat displayed by the overwhelming majority of the population, particularly by the masses of the toilers; for with heroic audacity, with revolutionary ruthlessness, the proletariat overthrows the yoke of capital, overthrows the exploiters, suppresses their resistance and sheds its blood to lay the road to the creation of the new society in which there will be no room for exploiters.

Great and inevitable as may be the petty-bourgeois waverings and vacillations of the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian masses of the toiling population to the side of bourgeois "order," under the "wing" of the bourgeoisie, they cannot but recognize the moral and political authority of the proletariat, which not only overthrows the exploiters and suppresses their resistance, but also builds new, higher, social connections, social discipline, the discipline of class-conscious and united workers, who know no yoke, who know no authority except that of their

own unity, of their own more class-conscious, bold, compact, revolutionary and steadfast vanguard.

In order to achieve victory, in order to create and consolidate Socialism, the proletariat must fulfil a twofold or dual task. first, by its devoted heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital, to win over the whole mass of the toilers and exploited, to win them over, organize them and lead them in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to utterly suppress its resistance. Second, it must lead the whole mass of the toilers and exploited as well as all the petty-bourgeois strata on the road of new economic construction, on the road to the creation of new social ties, a new labour discipline, a new organization of labour, which will combine the last word of science and capitalist technique with the mass association of class-conscious workers engaged in large-scale Socialist production.

The second task is more difficult than the first, for it cannot possibly be fulfilled by single acts of heroism, it requires the most prolonged, most persistent and most difficult mass heroism and *prosaic, everyday* work But this task is more material than the first, because, in the last analysis, the new and higher mode of social production, the substitution of large scale Socialist production for capitalist and petty-bourgeois production, can alone serve as the deepest source of strength for victory over the bourgeoisie and the sole guarantee of the durability and permanence of this victory.

* * *

"Communist subbotniks" are of such enormous historical significance precisely because they display the class-conscious and voluntary initiative of the workers in developing the productivity of labour, in adopting the new labour discipline, in creating Socialist conditions of economy and life.

One of the few, in fact it would be more correct to say one of the exceptionally rare, bourgeois democrats of Germany who, after the lessons of 1870 71, went over not to the side of chauvinism or national liberalism, but to the side of Socialism, J. Jacoby, said that the formation of a single trade union was of greater historical significance than the battle of Sadowa * This is true The battle of Sadowa decided the question of the supremacy of one of two bourgeois monarchies, the Austrian or the Prussian, in creating a national, German, capitalist state. The formation of a single trade union was a tiny step towards the world victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. Similarly, we can say that the first Communist subbotnik organized in Moscow on May 10, 1919, by the railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway was of greater historical

* The Battle of Sadowa (in Bohemia) on July 3, 1866, decided the outcome of the Austrian Prussian War in favour of Prussia —*Ed*

significance than any of the victories of Hindenburg, or of Foch and the British, in the imperialist war of 1914-18. The victory of the imperialists is the slaughter of millions of workers for the sake of the profits of the Anglo-American and French billionaires; it is the brutality of doomed, overfed and decaying capitalism. The Communist subbotnik organized by the railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway is one of the cells of the new Socialist society which brings to all the peoples of the earth emancipation from the yoke of capitalism and from wars.

Messieurs the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are accustomed to regard themselves as the representatives of "public opinion," of course, jeer at the hopes of the Communists, call these hopes "a baobab tree in a mignonette flower-pot," sneer at the insignificant number of subbotniks held compared with the vast number of cases of thieving, idleness, decline of productivity, spoiling of raw materials, spoiling of finished goods, etc. In reply to these gentlemen we say: Had the bourgeois intelligentsia brought their knowledge to the assistance of the toilers instead of giving it to the Russian and foreign capitalists in order to restore their power, the revolution would have proceeded more rapidly and more peacefully. But this is utopia, for the question is decided by the struggle between classes, and the majority of the intellectuals are drawn towards the bourgeoisie. The proletariat is achieving victory, not with the assistance of the intelligentsia, but in spite of its opposition (at least in the majority of cases); it is removing the incorrigible bourgeois intellectuals, transforming, re-educating and subordinating the waverers, and gradually winning a larger and larger section over to its side. Gloating over the difficulties and setbacks of the revolution, sowing panic and preaching the return to the past—these are the weapons and the methods of class struggle employed by the bourgeois intellectuals. The proletariat will not allow itself to be deceived by them.

Taking the essence of the question, has there ever been a case in history in which the new mode of production took root immediately without a considerable number of setbacks, mistakes and relapses? Not a few survivals of serfdom remained in the Russian countryside half a century after serfdom was abolished. Half a century after the abolition of slavery in America the position of the Negroes is still very often that of semi-slavery. The bourgeois intelligentsia, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, are true to themselves in serving capital and in adhering to the absolutely false position—after having reproached us for being utopian before the proletarian revolution—of expecting us to be able to wipe out the traces of the past in a fantastically short space of time!

But we are not utopians and we know the real value of bourgeois "arguments"; we know also that for some time after the revolution traces of the old ethics will inevitably predominate over the young shoots of the

new. When the new has just been born the old still remains, and for some time it will be stronger than the new, as is always the case in nature and in social life. Jeering at the feebleness of the young shoots, cheap intellectual sneers and the like are in essence the methods employed by the bourgeoisie in the class struggle against the proletariat, they are the defence of capitalism against Socialism. We must carefully study the feeble young shoots of the new, we must devote the greatest attention to them, do everything to promote their growth and "nurse" them Some of them will inevitably perish. We cannot be absolutely certain that the "Communist subbotniks" will play a particularly important role. But that is not the point. The point is to foster all and every shoot of the new, and life will select the most virile. If the Japanese scientist, in order to help to find a means of conquering syphilis, had the patience to test six hundred and five substances before he discovered the six hundred and sixth which answered to certain requirements, then those who want to solve a more difficult problem, *i.e.*, to conquer capitalism, must have the perseverance to try hundreds and thousands of new methods, means and weapons of struggle in order to discover the most suitable of them

The "Communist subbotniks" are so important because they were initiated by workers who do not in the least enjoy exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various trades, and some with no trade at all, unskilled labourers, who are living under *ordinary*, *i.e* , *very hard*, conditions. We all know very well the main cause of the decline in the productivity of labour that is observed, not only in Russia, but all over the world it is ruin and impoverishment, discontent and weariness caused by the imperialist war, sickness and starvation. The latter is first in importance. Starvation—that is the cause. And in order to abolish starvation, the productivity of labour must be raised in agriculture, in transport and in industry. Thus we get a sort of vicious circle: in order to raise the productivity of labour we must save ourselves from starvation, and in order to save ourselves from starvation we must raise the productivity of labour.

It is well known that such contradictions are solved in practice by breaking the vicious circle, by bringing about a change in the mood of the masses, by the heroic initiative of individual groups which, on the background of such a change in the mood of the masses, often plays a decisive role. The unskilled labourers and railway workers of Moscow (of course, we have in mind the majority of them, and not a handful of profiteers, officials and other Whiteguards) are working people who are living in desperately hard conditions. They are constantly underfed, and now, before the new harvest is gathered, with the general worsening of the food situation, they are actually starving. And yet these starving workers, surrounded by the malicious counter-revolutionary agitation of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, organize "Communist subbotniks," work overtime *without any pay*, and

achieve *an enormous increase in productivity of labour* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, exhausted by starvation. Is this not magnificent heroism? Is this not the beginning of a change of world-historic significance?

In the last analysis, productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labour unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished, by the fact that Socialism creates a new and much higher productivity of labour. This is a very difficult matter and must take considerable time; but *it has been started*, and that is the main thing. If in starving Moscow, in the summer of 1919, the starving workers who had gone through four trying years of imperialist war and another year and a half of still more trying civil war could start this great work, how will it develop later when we triumph in the civil war and win peace?

Communism is the higher productivity of labour—compared with capitalist productivity of labour—of voluntary, class-conscious, united workers employing advanced technique. Communist subbotniks are extraordinarily valuable as the *actual* beginning of *Communism*; and this is a very rare thing, because we are in the stage when "only the *first steps* in the transition from capitalism to Communism are being taken" (as our Party program quite rightly says).

Communism begins when the *rank-and-file workers* begin to display self-sacrificing concern that overcomes all obstacles for increasing the productivity of labour, for husbanding *every pood of grain, coal, iron* and other products, which do not accrue to the workers personally, or to their "close kith and kin," but to their "remote" kith and kin, *i.e.*, to society as a whole, to tens and hundreds of millions of people, organized first in a single Socialist state, and then in a Union of Soviet Republics.

In *Capital*, Karl Marx ridicules the pompous and grandiloquent bourgeois-democratic great charter of liberty and the rights of man, ridicules all this phrasemongering about liberty, equality and fraternity *in general*, which dazzles the petty bourgeois and philistines of all countries, including the present despicable heroes of the despicable Berne International. Marx contrasts these pompous declarations of rights to the plain, modest, practical, everyday presentation of the question by the proletariat: the legislative enactment of a shorter working day—this is a typical example of the way it presents the question. The aptness and profundity of Marx's observation become the clearer and more obvious to us the more the content of the proletarian revolution unfolds. The "formulae" of genuine Communism differ from the pompous, involved, solemn phrasemongering of the Kautskys, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their beloved "brethren" of Berne in that they reduce everything to the *conditions of labour*. Less chatter about "industrial democracy," about "liberty, equality and fraternity," about "government by the peo-

ple," and all such stuff, the class-conscious workers and peasants of our day see the dishonesty of the bourgeois intellectual through these pompous phrases as easily as the ordinary person with common sense and experience, in glancing at the irreproachably "smooth" features and dapper appearance of the "fain fellow, dontcher know," immediately and unerringly puts him down as "in all probability, a scoundrel."

Fewer pompous phrases, more plain, *everyday* work, concern for the pood of grain and the pood of coal! More concern for supplying this pood of grain and the pood of coal that the hungry workers and ragged and barefooted peasants need, not by means of *huckstering*, not in a capitalist manner, but by means of the class-conscious, voluntary, boundlessly heroic labour of plain working men like the unskilled labourers and railwaymen on the Moscow-Kazan Railway.

We must all admit that traces of the bourgeois-intellectual phrasemongering approach to questions of the revolution are observed at every step, everywhere, even in our ranks. Our press, for example, does not fight sufficiently against these putrid survivals of the decayed, bourgeois-democratic past, it does not render sufficient assistance to the simple, modest, everyday but virile shoots of genuine Communism

Take the position of women Not a single democratic party in the world, not even in the most advanced bourgeois republic, has done in tens of years a hundredth part of what we did in the very first year we were in power In the literal sense of the word, we did not leave a single brick standing of the despicable laws which placed women in a state of inferiority compared with men, of the laws restricting divorce, of the disgusting formalities connected with divorce, of the laws on illegitimate children and on searching for their fathers, etc To the shame of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism be it said, numerous survivals of these laws exist in all civilized countries We have a right a thousand times to be proud of what we have done in this sphere But the more *thoroughly* we clear the ground of the lumber of the old bourgeois laws and institutions, the clearer it becomes to us that we are only clearing the ground for the new structure, we are not yet building it.

Notwithstanding all the liberating laws that have been passed, woman continues to be a *domestic slave*, because *petty housework* crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and to the nursery, and wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real *emancipation of women*, real Communism, will begin only when a mass struggle (led by the proletariat which is in power) is started against this petty domestic economy, or rather when it is *transformed on a mass scale* into large scale Socialist economy.

Do we in practice devote sufficient attention to this question, which, theoretically, is indisputable for every Communist? Of course not. Do we devote sufficient care to the *young shoots* of Communism which have already

sprung up in this sphere? Again we must say emphatically, No! Public dining rooms, crèches, kindergartens—these are examples of the shoots, the simple everyday means, which assume nothing pompous, grandiloquent or solemn, but which can *in fact emancipate women*, which can in fact lessen and abolish their inferiority to men in regard to their role in social production and in social life. These means are not new, they (like all the material prerequisites for Socialism) were created by large-scale capitalism; but under capitalism they remained, first, a rarity, and second, and what is particularly important, either *profit-making* enterprises, with all the worst features of speculation, profiteering, cheating and fraud, or the "acrobatics of bourgeois philanthropy," which the best workers quite rightly hated and despised.

There is no doubt that the number of these institutions in our country has increased enormously and that they are *beginning* to change in character. There is no doubt that there is far more *organizing talent* among the working women and peasant women than we are aware of, people who are able to organize in a practical way and enlist large numbers of workers, and a still larger number of consumers, for this purpose without the abundance of phrases, fuss, squabbling and chatter about plans, systems, etc., which our swelled-headed "intelligentsia" or half-baked "Communists" "suffer" from. But we do *not nurse* these new shoots with sufficient care.

Look at the bourgeoisie! How well it is able to advertise what *it* requires! See how what the capitalists regard as "model" enterprises are praised in millions of copies of *their* newspapers; see how "model" bourgeois institutions are transformed into objects of national pride! Our press does not take the trouble, or hardly takes the trouble, to describe the best dining rooms or crèches, in order by daily exhortation to secure the transformation of some of them into models. It does not give them enough publicity, does not describe in detail what saving in human labour, what conveniences for the consumer, what a saving in products, what emancipation of women from domestic slavery and what an improvement in sanitary conditions can be achieved with *exemplary Communist labour* for the whole of society, for all the toilers.

Exemplary production, exemplary Communist subbotniks, exemplary care and conscientiousness in procuring and distributing every pood of grain, exemplary dining rooms, exemplary cleanliness in such-and-such a workers' apartment house, in such-and-such a block—all these should receive ten times more attention and care from our press, as well as from *every* workers' and peasants' organization, than they receive now. All these are the young shoots of Communism; and nursing these shoots should be our common and primary duty. Difficult as our food and production situation may be, we can point to undoubted progress during the year and a half of Bolshevik rule *along the whole front*. Grain collections have increased from 30,000,000 poods (from August 1, 1917, to August 1, 1918) to 100,000,000 poods (from August 1, 1918, to May 1, 1919); vegetable gar-

dening has increased, the margin of unsown land has diminished, railway transport has begun to improve notwithstanding the enormous fuel difficulties, and so on Against this general background, and with the support of the proletarian state, these young shoots of Communism will not wither, they will grow and blossom into complete Communism.

* * *

We must ponder very deeply over the significance of "Communist subbotniks" in order that we may learn all the very important practical lessons that are to be learnt from this great beginning.

The first and main lesson is that we must give every kind of assistance to this beginning The word "commune" is beginning to be used with too great freedom Every enterprise that is started by Communists, or which they help to start, is very often at once declared to be a "commune," and very often it is forgotten that this *honourable title* must be *won* by prolonged and persistent effort, must be won by *practical* achievement in genuine Communist construction

That is why, in my opinion, the decision that has matured in the minds of the majority of the members of the Central Executive Committee to *repeal* the decree of the Council of People's Commissars on the *title* of "consumers' communes" is quite right Let them bear simpler titles, and then the defects and weaknesses of the *first* stages of the new organizational work will not be attributed to the "commune," but (as in all fairness they should be) to the *bad* Communists It would be a good thing to eliminate the word "commune" from *everyday* use, to prohibit every first comer from snatching at this word, or *allow this title to be borne only* by genuine communes, which have revealed in practice (unanimously confirmed by the whole of the surrounding population) that they are capable of organizing in a Communist manner. First show that you are capable of working gratis in the interests of society, in the interests of all the toilers, show that you are capable of "working in a revolutionary style," that you are capable of raising the productivity of labour, of organizing in an exemplary manner, and then put out your hand for the honourable title of "commune"!

In this respect, the "Communist subbotniks" are a most valuable exception, for the unskilled labourers and railway workers on the Moscow-Kazan Railway *first* showed *by deeds* that they are capable of working like Communists, and then adopted the title of "Communist subbotniks" for their undertaking We must see to it that in future everyone who calls his enterprise, institution or undertaking a commune *without having set an example* of real Communist organization, achieved as a result of hard work and practical *success in prolonged effort*, shall be made a laughing stock, and mercilessly pilloried as a charlatan or a windbag.

The great beginning of "Communist subbotniks" must also be utilized for another purpose—for *purging* the Party. It was absolutely inevitable

in the first period after the revolution, when the masses of "honest" and philistine-minded people were particularly timorous, and when the whole of the bourgeois intelligentsia, including, of course, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, sabotaged us and cringed before the bourgeoisie, it was absolutely inevitable that adventurers and other pernicious elements should attach themselves to the ruling party. Not a single revolution has been able to avoid that. The whole point is that the ruling party should be able, relying on a sound and strong advanced class, to purge its ranks.

We started on this work long ago. We must continue it steadily and untiringly. The mobilization of Communists for the war helped us in this respect: the cowards and scoundrels fled from the Party. A good riddance! *Such* a reduction in membership is an *enormous increase* in its strength and weight. We must continue the purging, and utilize the beginning made in *"Communist subbotniks" for this purpose, i.e., accept members only after* six months', say, "trial," or "probation," in "working in a revolutionary style." All members of the Party who joined after October 25, 1917 and who have not proved by some special work or service that they are absolutely reliable, loyal and capable of being Communists, should be put to the same test.

The purging of the Party, owing to the *higher demands* it will make in regard to working in a genuinely Communist way, will improve the state *apparatus*, and will bring ever so much nearer the *final transition* of the peasants to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

Incidentally, the "Communist subbotniks" have thrown a remarkably strong light on the class character of the state apparatus under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Central Committee drafts a letter on "working in a revolutionary style."* The idea is suggested by the Central Committee of a party of 100,000 to 200,000 members (I assume that that is the number that will remain after a thorough purging; at present the membership is larger).

The idea is taken up by the workers organized in trade unions. In Russia and the Ukraine they number about 4,000,000. The overwhelming majority of them are for the proletarian state, for the proletarian dictatorship. Two hundred thousand and four million: such is the correlation of "cogwheels," if one may so express it. Then follow the *tens of millions* of peasants, who are split up into three main groups: the most numerous and standing closest to the proletariat—the semi-proletarians or poor peasants; then come the middle peasants, and lastly the numerically very small group of kulaks or rural bourgeoisie.

As long as it is possible to trade in grain and to make profit out of famine, the peasant will remain (and this is inevitable for a certain period of time under the dictatorship of the proletariat) a

* See "Theses of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in Connection with the Situation on the Eastern Front" in this volume, pp. 467-69.—*Ed.*

semi toiler and semi profiteer As a profiteer he is hostile to us, hostile to the proletarian state, he is inclined to agree with the bourgeoisie and their faithful lackeys, up to and including the Menshevik Sher or the Socialist Revolutionary B Chernenkov, who stand for freedom to trade in grain But *as a toiler*, the peasant is a friend of the proletarian state, a loyal ally of the worker in the struggle against the landlord and against the capitalist As a toiler, the peasant, the vast mass of the peasants, supports the state "machine" which is headed by a Communist, proletarian vanguard a hundred or two hundred thousand strong, and which consists of millions of organized proletarians.

A more democratic state, democratic in the true sense of the word, a state more closely connected with the toiling and exploited masses, has *never existed before*

It is precisely such proletarian work as is called "Communist subbotniks," the work which is done at these subbotniks, that will serve to win completely the respect and love of the peasantry for the proletarian state. Such work, and only such work, completely convinces the peasant that we are right, that Communism is right, and makes the peasant our loyal ally And this will lead to the complete overcoming of the food difficulties, to the complete victory of Communism over capitalism on the question of the production and distribution of grain, it will lead to the absolute consolidation of Communism

Published as a separate
pamphlet in July 1919

ALL OUT FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST DENIKIN!

LETTER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS) TO THE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

Comrades,

This is one of the most critical, probably even the most critical moment in the Socialist revolution. The defenders of the exploiters, of the landlords and capitalists, Russian and foreign (and in the first instance the British and French), are making desperate efforts to restore the power of the robbers of national labour, the landlords and exploiters, in Russia, in order to bolster up their waning power all over the world. The British and French capitalists have failed in their plan to conquer the Ukraine with their own troops; they have failed in their support of Kolchak in Siberia; the Red Army, heroically advancing in the Urals with the help of the Urals workers, who are rising to a man, is nearing Siberia with the purpose of liberating it from the incredible tyranny and brutality of the overlords there, the capitalists. Lastly, the British and French imperialists have failed in their plan to seize Petrograd by means of a counter-revolutionary conspiracy, in which participated Russian monarchists, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, not even excluding Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The foreign capitalists are now making a desperate effort to restore the yoke of capital with the help of an onslaught by Denikin, whom they are helping, as they once helped Kolchak, with officers, supplies, shells, tanks, etc., etc.

All the forces of the workers and peasants, all the forces of the Soviet Republic, must be harnessed to repulse Denikin's onslaught and to vanquish him, without suspending the Red Army's victorious advance into the Urals and Siberia. That is the

MAIN TASK OF THE MOMENT

All Communists first and foremost, all sympathizers with them, all honest workers and peasants, all Soviet officials, must *display military efficiency* and concentrate *to the maximum their work*, their efforts and their concern *directly on the tasks of war*, on the speedy repulse of De-

nikin's onslaught, curtailing and rearranging all their other activities in subordination to this task

The Soviet Republic is besieged by the enemy It must become *a single military camp*, not in word but in deed

All the work of all institutions must be adapted to the war and placed on a military footing!

Committee methods are essential for the conduct of the affairs of the workers' and peasants' state But any distention of committee methods, any abuse of them which results in red tape and irresponsibility, any attempt to convert committee institutions into talk shops is a supreme evil, an evil which must be put a stop to at all costs and as quickly as possible, whatever it may entail

Committee methods must not exceed an absolutely essential minimum in respect both to the number of members in the committees and to the efficient conduct of business, "speechifying" must be ruled out, opinions must be exchanged as rapidly as possible and confined to information and precisely formulated practical proposals

Whenever it is in the least possible, committee methods must be reduced to the briefest discussion of only the most important questions in the narrowest committee bodies, while the *practical management* of institutions enterprises, businesses or tasks would be entrusted *to one comrade*, known for his firmness, resolution, boldness and ability to conduct practical affairs and enjoying the greatest confidence At any rate, and under all circumstances without exception, committee methods must be accompanied by the precisest definition of the personal responsibility of *every* individual for a *precisely defined* job Undefined responsibility under the guise of committee methods is the most dangerous evil threatening all who have not had very extensive experience in efficient committee work, and in military affairs all too often leads inevitably to disaster, chaos, panic, division of authority and defeat

A no less dangerous evil is the organizational itch and fantastic organizational schemes Reconstruction of work necessitated by the war must under no circumstances lead to the reconstruction of institutions, still less to the hasty formation of new institutions That would be absolutely impermissible and would only lead to chaos Reconstruction of work should consist in suspending for a time institutions which are not absolutely essential, or in reducing their size But all work in aid of the war must be conducted *entirely and exclusively t h r o u g h already existing* military institutions, by improving, strengthening, expanding or supporting them The creation of special "defence committees" or "revcoms" (revolutionary or revolutionary military committees) is permissible, firstly, only by way of exception secondly, only with the approval of the competent military authority or the superior Soviet authority, and, thirdly, only provided the above-mentioned conditions are absolutely complied with,

THE TRUTH ABOUT KOLCHAK AND DENIKIN MUST BE EXPLAINED TO THE PEOPLE

Kolchak and Denikin are the chief, and the only, serious enemies of the Soviet Republic. If it were not for the help they are getting from the Entente (England, France, America) they would have gone to pieces long ago. It is only the help of the Entente which makes them strong. But they are forced, nevertheless, to dupe the people, to pretend from time to time that they believe in "democracy," a "Constituent Assembly," "government by the people," etc. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are only too willing to be duped.

The truth about Kolchak (and Denikin is his double) has now been fully revealed. Shooting of *tens of thousands* of workers. Shooting even of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Flogging of peasants of entire districts. Public flogging of women. The absolutely unbridled power of the officers and young squires. Endless looting. Such is the truth about Kolchak and Denikin. Even among the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who themselves betrayed the workers and sided with Kolchak and Denikin, increasing numbers of people are forced to admit this truth.

The enlightenment of the people to these facts must be made the cornerstone of all our agitation and propaganda. It must be explained that the alternative is either Kolchak and Denikin or the Soviet power, the power (dictatorship) of the workers. There is no middle course; there can be no middle course. Particular use must be made of the testimony of non-Bolshevik eye-witnesses: of Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and non-party people who *have been* with Kolchak and Denikin. Let every worker and peasant know what the fight is for, what awaits him in the event of a victory for Kolchak or Denikin.

WORK AMONG THE MOBILIZED

One of our chief concerns must now be work among those liable to mobilization, work in aid of mobilization, and work among the mobilized. Wherever mobilized men are concentrated, or where there are garrisons, and especially reserve battalions, etc., Communists and sympathizers must be brought into action to a man. They must all without exception unite and work, some daily, others, say, four or eight hours per week, in aid of mobilization and among mobilized men, among the soldiers of the local garrison, in a strictly organized way, of course, each being assigned to appropriate work by the local Party organization and the military authorities.

Non-Party people or people not belonging to the Communist Party, are not in a position, of course, to carry on ideological work against Denikin or Kolchak. But to release them for that reason from all work would be impermissible. Every means must be sought that would make it incumbent

on the whole population (and the *wealthier sections*, both in town and country, in the first place) to contribute their share, in one form or another, in aid of mobilization or the mobilized.

Measures to further the quickest and most efficient training of the mobilized should form a special category of assistance. The Soviet government is calling up all ex-officers, non-commissioned officers, etc. The Communist Party, as well as all sympathizers and all workers, must assist the workers' and peasants' state, firstly, by helping to round up all ex-officers, non-commissioned officers, etc., who do not register for service, and, secondly, by organizing, under the control of the Party organization or its groups, those who have had theoretical or practical (e.g., in the imperialist war) military training and who are capable of doing their share.

WORK AMONG DESERTERS

An obvious change for the better has latterly taken place in the fight against desertion. In a number of provinces deserters have begun to return to the army *en masse*; it is no exaggeration to say that deserters are flocking to the Red Army. The reasons are, firstly, that Party comrades are working more capably and systematically, and, secondly, the growing realization by the peasants that Kolchak and Denikin mean the restoration of a worse system than the tsarist system, the restoration of *slavery* for the workers and peasants, and of floggings, robbery and insults on the part of the officers and scions of the nobility.

We must therefore everywhere *spare no effort* in working among deserters and bringing them back into the army. That is one of the primary and essential tasks of the day.

Incidentally, the possibility of influencing deserters by persuasion and the *success* of such influence is demonstrated by the absolutely *different* attitude towards the peasantry on the part of the workers' state as compared with that in landlord and capitalist states. The threat of the rod or the threat of starvation—that is what constitutes the sole source of discipline of the two latter forms of state. *Another* source of discipline is possible in the case of the workers' state, or the dictatorship of the proletariat, namely, persuasion of the peasants by the workers, a comradely alliance between them. When you hear the accounts of eye-witnesses that in such and such a province (Ryazan, for instance) thousands upon thousands of deserters are returning voluntarily, that the appeal at meetings to "comrades deserters" sometimes has a success which beggars all description, you begin to realize how much unutilized *power* lies in this comradely alliance between the workers and peasants. The peasant has his *prejudice*, which inclines him to support the capitalist, the Socialist Revolutionary, and "freedom of trade," but he also has his *reason*, which is impelling him more and more towards an alliance with the workers,

DIRECT AID TO THE ARMY

What our army needs most is *supplies*: clothing, footwear, arms, shells. With the country impoverished as it is, an immense effort has to be made to satisfy the army's needs, and it is only the assistance which the capitalist robbers of England, France and America are so lavishly rendering Kolchak and Denikin that saves them from inevitable disaster owing to shortage of supplies.

But impoverished though Russia is, she still has plenty of resources which we have still not utilized, and often have shown *no capacity* to utilize. There are still many undiscovered or unverified military stores, plenty of production potentialities which are overlooked, partly owing to the deliberate sabotage of officials, partly owing to red-tape, bureaucracy, inefficiency and incompetence—all those "sins of the past," which so inevitably and so drastically handicap every revolution which makes a "leap" into a new social order.

Direct aid to the army in this field is highly important. The institutions in charge of it are particularly in need of "fresh blood," of outside assistance from the voluntary, energetic and heroic *initiative* of the workers and peasants *in the localities*.

We must appeal as widely as possible to this initiative of all class-conscious workers and peasants, and of all Soviet officials; we must test in different localities and in different fields of work *diverse* forms of assistance to the army in this respect. "Work in a revolutionary style" is far less in evidence here than in other spheres, yet "work in a revolutionary style" is *far more needed* here.

Collection of arms from the population is an integral part of this work. That there are plenty of arms hidden among the peasants and the bourgeoisie in a country which has been through four years of imperialist war followed by two people's revolutions is natural and inevitable. But we must combat it *with all our might* now, in face of Denikin's menacing onslaught. Whoever conceals or abets in concealing arms is guilty of a heinous crime against the workers and peasants and deserves to be shot, for he is responsible for the death of thousands upon thousands of our finest Red Armymen, who not infrequently perish solely because of a shortage of arms at the fronts.

The Petrograd comrades succeeded in unearthing thousands upon thousands of rifles when they conducted mass searches—in a strictly organized way. The rest of Russia must not lag behind Petrograd and must at all costs overtake and outstrip it.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that the largest numbers of rifles are hidden by the peasants, and often enough without the least evil intention, but solely from an ingrained distrust of any form of "government," etc. If we have been able to do much, very much (in the best provinces) by means of *persuasion*, skilful agitation and a proper approach to get desert-

ers to return to the Red Army voluntarily, there can be no doubt that just as much, if not more, can be done, and should be done, to secure a voluntary *return of arms*

Workers and peasants, look for concealed rifles and turn them over to the army! By doing so you will save yourselves from massacre, shooting, wholesale flogging and robbery by Kolchak and Denikin!

CURTAILMENT OF NON MILITARY WORK

To carry out even a part of the duties briefly enumerated above we shall need more and more workers, drawn, moreover, from the most reliable, devoted and energetic Communists But where are they to come from, bearing in mind the universal complaints about the dearth of such workers and the over fatigue they are suffering from?

There can be no doubt that these complaints are largely justified If anyone were to make an exact estimate of that thin stratum of advanced workingmen and Communists who enjoy the support and sympathy of the worker and peasant masses and who administered Russia in these last twenty months, it would seem truly incredible Yet we administered with signal success, upbuilding Socialism, overcoming unbelievable difficulties, and vanquishing the enemies, directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie, that raised their heads everywhere And we have already vanquished all enemies except one the Entente, the all powerful imperialist bourgeoisie of Britain, France and America And, even so, we have already smashed one of the hands of this enemy—Kolchak We are only threatened by his other hand—Denikin

New forces for the administration of the state and for the performance of the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat are growing up rapidly in the shape of the worker and peasant youth who are most earnestly, zealously and fervidly learning, digesting the new impressions of the new order, throwing off the husk of old, capitalist and bourgeois democratic prejudices, and moulding themselves into even firmer Communists than the older generation

But however rapidly this new stratum may be growing, however rapidly it may be learning and maturing in the fire of the civil war and the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie, all the same in the next few months it cannot supply us with *ready* forces for the administration of the state Yet it *is precisely the next few months, the summer and autumn of 1919*, that count, for a *decision* of the struggle against Denikin is demanded and must be forthcoming *immediately*

In order to obtain a large number of ready forces to strengthen the war effort we must *retrench* a number of non-military spheres and institutions, or, rather, we must retrench work that is not directly military work, Soviet work, we must *reconstruct* on these lines (*i e.*, on the lines of retrenchment) all institutions and enterprises which are *not absolutely essential*,

Take, as a case in point, the Scientific and Technical Department of the Supreme Council of National Economy. This is a highly valuable institution, one essential for the complete building of Socialism, for maintaining proper account of and properly distributing all our scientific and technical forces. But is such an institution absolutely essential? Of course, not. To assign to it people who could and should be immediately employed in urgent and cryingly essential Communist work *in the army* or *directly* for the army would, at the present juncture, be a downright crime.

There are quite a number of such institutions and departments of institutions in the centre and in the provinces. In our efforts fully to realize Socialism we could not do otherwise than begin to create such institutions immediately. But we would be fools or criminals if, in the face of Denikin's formidable onslaught, we were unable to *re-form our ranks* in such a way as to *suspend* or *retrench everything* that is not absolutely essential.

We must not give way to panic or succumb to the organizational itch and must not reconstruct any institutions nor close them down altogether, nor—which is particularly harmful in hasty work—must we begin to build new institutions. What we must do is to *suspend* for three, four or five months *all* institutions or departments of institutions, both in the centre and in the provinces, which are not absolutely essential, or, if it is not possible to suspend them altogether, *retrench* them for such-and-such (approximate) period, retrench them to the greatest possible extent, in other words, leave them only an absolutely essential minimum of work.

Inasmuch as our main purpose is to secure at once a large number of ready, experienced, devoted and tested Communists or sympathizers of Socialism for war work, we must incur the risk of temporarily leaving many of the retrenched institutions (or departments of institutions) *without a single Communist*, of placing them exclusively in the hands of bourgeois executives. That is not a big risk, for it is only institutions which are not absolutely essential that are involved, and while there will certainly be a loss from the weakening of their (semi-suspended) activities, it will not be a great loss though, and one which at any rate will not be fatal to us. But insufficient energy in strengthening military work, and strengthening it immediately and considerably, may be fatal to us. This must be clearly understood and all the necessary conclusions drawn from it.

If every director of a government body or department of a government body in every province, district, etc., if every Communist nucleus, without losing a moment, were to ask themselves: is such-and-such an institution, such-and-such a department absolutely essential, will it be disastrous to us if we suspend it or retrench nine-tenths of its activities and leave no Communists in it at all?—if the posing of this question is followed by speedy and resolute retrenchment of work and withdrawal of Communists (together with their absolutely reliable assistants among the sympathizers or non-Party people), we shall then be able in a very short time to secure hundreds and hundreds of persons for work in the political depart-

ments of the army, for the posts of commissars, etc. And then we shall have a very good chance of vanquishing Denikin, just as we vanquished the much stronger Kolchak.

WORK IN THE WAR-FRONT AREA

The war-front area in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic has in the past few weeks grown excessively and undergone an extremely rapid change. This is a harbinger and concomitant of the decisive moment of the war, of its approaching concluding phase.

On the one hand, a vast war-front area, in the Cis-Urals and the Urals, has become our war-front area owing to the victories of the Red Army and the disintegration of Kolchak, of the growth of revolution in Kolchakia. On the other hand, *an even larger* area outside Petrograd and in the South has become a war-front area owing to our losses, owing to the immense advance made by the enemy towards Petrograd and the advance from the South towards the Ukraine and the centre of Russia.

Work in the war-front area is assuming cardinal importance.

In the Cis-Urals, where the Red Army is rapidly advancing, there is a natural desire among army workers, commissars, members of political departments, etc., as well as among local workingmen and peasants, to settle in the newly-won localities for constructive Soviet work, a desire which is the more natural, the greater the war fatigue and the more distressful the picture of the destruction caused by Kolchak. But nothing could be more dangerous than to yield to this desire. It would threaten the weakening of our offensive, its retardation, and increase Kolchak's chances of recuperating. It would be a downright crime towards the revolution on our part.

Under no circumstances must a single extra worker be taken from the Eastern Army for local work! * Under no circumstances must the offensive be weakened! The only chance we have of complete victory is for the entire population of the Cis-Urals and the Urals, who have experienced the horrors of Kolchak "democracy," to take part in it to a man, and to continue the offensive into Siberia until the *complete victory* of the revolution in Siberia.

Let constructive work in the Cis-Urals and the Urals be delayed, let it proceed less intensively with the aid of purely local, young, inexperienced and weak forces. We shall not perish from that. But from the *weakening* of the offensive into the Urals and Siberia *we shall perish*. We must *strengthen* that offensive with the forces of the insurgent workers in the Urals, with the forces of the Cis-Urals peasants, who have now learned to their cost the meaning of the "Constituent" promises of the Menshevik Maisky and the

* None should be taken at all without urgent need, but rather transferred from the central provinces!

Socialist-Revolutionary Chernov, and the meaning of the real substance behind these promises, *in other words, Kolchak*.

To weaken the offensive into the Urals and Siberia would be to betray the revolution, to betray the cause of the emancipation of the workers and peasants from the Kolchak yoke.

It should be remembered in connection with the work in the war-front area which has only just been liberated that the main task there is to win the confidence not only of the workers, but of the peasants as well towards Soviet rule, to explain to them in practice that Soviet rule means the rule of the workers and peasants, and at once to take the right course, which has been learned by the Party from the experience of twenty months of work. We must not repeat in the Urals the mistakes which were sometimes committed in Great Russia and which we are rapidly learning to avoid.

In the war-front area outside Petrograd and in that vast war-front area which is so rapidly and menacingly growing in the Ukraine and in the south, absolutely everything must be put on a war footing, and all work, all efforts, all thoughts must be subordinated to the war and only the war. Otherwise it will be impossible to repulse Denikin's onslaught. That is clear. And it must be clearly understood and fully put into practice.

Incidentally. One feature of Denikin's army is its abundance of officers and Cossacks. This is an element which, having no mass force behind it, is extremely prone to swift raids, to take hazards, to desperate ventures, with the object of sowing panic and causing destruction for destruction's sake.

In fighting such a foe military discipline and military vigilance in the highest degree are necessary. To be caught napping or to lose one's head means losing everything. Every responsible Party or Soviet official must bear this in mind.

Military discipline in military and all other matters!

Military vigilance and strictness, and resoluteness in the adoption of all measures of precaution!

ATTITUDE TOWARDS MILITARY EXPERTS

The vast conspiracy which broke into the open at Krassnaya Gorka* and whose purpose was the surrender of Petrograd has again brought forward and with unusual emphasis the question of the military experts and of combating counter-revolution in the rear. There can be no doubt but that the aggravation of the food and military situation is inevitably

* The mutiny of Krassnaya Gorka Fort, as also the entire conspiracy engineered in June 1919 by the British intelligence service, was disclosed and crushed at the time under the direct supervision of Comrade Stalin who, acting on the instructions of the Central Committee, arrived in Petrograd for the purpose of organizing the defence of the city.—*Ed.*

stimulating, and will continue to stimulate in the immediate future, increased efforts on the part of the counter-revolutionaries (in the Petrograd plot participated the "League of Regeneration," Cadets, Mensheviks and Right Socialist Revolutionaries, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries also participated, a few, it is true, but they did participate nevertheless). Nor can there be any doubt but that the military experts, like the kulaks, the bourgeois intellectuals, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, will in the near future produce a bigger proportion of traitors.

But it would be an irreparable mistake and unpardonable weakness of character to raise the question on this account of changing the principles of our military policy. Hundreds and hundreds of military experts are betraying us and will betray us, we will catch them and shoot them, but thousands and tens of thousands of military experts have been working for us systematically and for a long time, and without them we could not have formed the Red Army, which has grown out of the partisanism whose memory we execrate and which has been able to score brilliant victories in the East Experienced people who head our war department rightly point out that where the Party policy towards the military experts and the extirpation of partisanism has been adhered to most strictly, where discipline is firmest, where political work among the troops and the work of the political commissars is conducted most carefully, there, *generally speaking, do we least of all find military experts with an inclination to betray*, there the opportunities on the part of those who are so inclined to carry out their designs least of all exist, there we have no laxity in the army and its organization and morale are best, and there we have the most victories Partisanism, its aftermath, vestiges and survivals, have been the cause of immeasurably greater misfortune, disintegration, defeats, disasters and losses in men and military equipment in our army and the Ukrainian army than all the treachery of the military experts.

Our Party program, both on the general subject of bourgeois experts, and on the particular problem of one of their varieties, the military experts, has defined the policy of the Communist Party with absolute precision. Our Party is combating and will "ruthlessly combat the supposedly radical, but actually ignorant and self-conceited belief that the working people are capable of overcoming capitalism and the bourgeois order without learning from the bourgeois experts, without utilizing them, and without going through a *long schooling* of work side by side with them"

At the same time, of course, the Party does not make the "slightest political concession to this bourgeois stratum," the Party suppresses and will "ruthlessly suppress every counter revolutionary disposition on its part." Naturally, whenever such a "disposition" is manifested or becomes more or less probable, its "ruthless suppression" demands other qualities than the deliberateness, the cautiousness of a scholar, which are demanded by "long schooling," and which the latter inculcates. The contradiction between the attitude of people engaged in the "long schooling of work side

by side" with the military experts, and the attitude of people absorbed in the direct task of "ruthlessly suppressing the counter-revolutionary disposition" of military experts might easily lead, and does lead, to friction and conflict. The same applies to the necessary personal changes, the shifting around sometimes of large numbers of military experts which is necessitated by instances of counter-revolutionary "disposition," and all the more by big conspiracies.

We settle, and will continue to settle, such friction and conflicts in the Party way, demanding the same of all the Party organizations and insisting that not the least damage to practical work, not the slightest delay in the adoption of essential measures, not a shadow of hesitation in the observance of the established principles of our military policy be tolerated.

If some of our Party organizations adopt an incorrect tone towards the military experts (as was recently the case in Petrograd), if in some cases "criticism" of military experts becomes a direct hindrance to the systematic and persistent work of utilizing them, the Party immediately rectifies, and will rectify, such mistakes.

The major and principal means of rectifying them is to intensify political work in the army and among the mobilized, to smarten up the work of the army commissars, to improve the composition of the latter, to raise their level, to have them carry out *in practice* that which the Party program demands and which only too often is carried out far too inadequately, *viz.*: "the concentration of *all-round* control over the commanding ranks (of the army) in the hands of the working class." Criticism of the military experts from the side, attempts to correct matters by sporadic interference from outside, is too easy, and therefore hopeless and harmful. All who recognize their political responsibility, who take the defects of our army to heart, let them join its ranks, either as privates or commanders, as political workers or commissars; let each work—every Party member will find a place suited to his abilities—inside the military organization for its improvement.

The Soviet government has long been paying the utmost attention to making it possible for the workers, and also the peasants, and Communists in particular, to seriously master the military art. This is being done at a number of establishments, institutions and courses, but it is still being done far too inadequately. There is still a lot of room here for personal initiative and personal energy. In particular, Communists should zealously learn to handle machine guns, artillery, armoured materiel, etc., for here our backwardness is most felt, here the enemy's superiority, with his larger number of officers, is greatest, here it is possible for an unreliable military expert to do grave harm, here the role of the Communist is great in the extreme.

THE FIGHT AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN THE REAR

Just as in July of last year, counter-revolution is raising its head in our rear and in our midst

Counter revolution has been vanquished, but it is far from having been destroyed, and it is naturally taking advantage of Denikin's victories and of the aggravation of the food shortage And, as always, in the wake of direct and open counter revolution, in the wake of the Black-Hundreds and the Cadets, whose strength lies in their capital, their direct connections with Entente imperialism, and their realization of the inevitability of dictatorship and their ability to exercise it (on Kolchak lines), follow the wavering, spineless Mensheviks, Right Socialist Revolutionaries and Left Socialist Revolutionaries, who disguise their deeds with words

There must be no illusions on this score! What is the "nutritive medium" which engenders counter revolutionary enterprises, outbreaks, conspiracies and so forth we know full well It is the medium of the bourgeoisie, of the bourgeois intelligentsia, of the kulaks in the countryside, and, everywhere, of the "non Party" public, as well as of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks We must treble our watch over this medium, we must multiply it tenfold We must multiply our vigilance, because counter revolutionary attempts from this quarter are absolutely inevitable, precisely at the present moment and in the near future For this reason, too, repeated attempts to blow up bridges, to foment strikes, to engage in espionage of every kind, and the like, are quite natural All measures of precaution of the most intense, systematic, repeated, wholesale and sudden kind are essential in all centres without exception where the "nutritive medium" of the counter revolutionaries has the least chance of "lurking "

In regard to the Mensheviks and the Right and Left Socialist Revolutionaries, we must draw the lessons from our recent experience Among their "periphery," among the public which is attracted towards them, there is an undoubted movement away from Kolchak and Denikin towards the Soviet power We have taken cognizance of this movement, and every time it has assumed any real shape we, from our side, have taken a step to meet it This policy of ours we shall not change under any circumstances, and, generally speaking, the number of "migrations" from the Menshevism and Socialist-Revolutionarism which tend towards Kolchak and Denikin in the direction of the Menshevism and Socialist-Revolutionarism which tend towards the Soviet power will undoubtedly increase

But at the present juncture the petty bourgeois democrats, headed by the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who are spineless and wavering as always, are holding their noses to the wind and are swinging in the direction of the victor, Denikin This is especially true of the "political leaders" of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks

(of the type of Martov and Co.), of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries (of the type of Chernov and Co.), and of their "literary groups" in general, whose members, besides everything else, are deeply offended by their utter political bankruptcy, and have therefore an almost ineradicable "attraction" for hazardous ventures *against* the Soviet power.

We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the words and ideology of their leaders, by their personal integrity or hypocrisy. This may be important from the standpoint of their individual biographies. But it is not important from the standpoint of politics, *i.e.*, of the relations between classes, of the relations between millions of people. Martov and Co., "in the name of the Central Committee," solemnly condemn their "activists" and threaten (eternally threaten!) to expel them from the Party. But this by no means does away with the fact that the "activists" are the strongest of all among the Mensheviks, hide behind them, and carry on their work on behalf of Kolchak and Denikin. Volsky and Co. condemn Avksentyev, Chernov and Co., but this does not in the least prevent the latter from being stronger than Volsky, nor does it prevent Chernov from saying: "If it is not we who are to overthrow the Bolsheviks, and not now, then who is, and when?" The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries may "work" "independently" without any understanding with the reactionaries, with the Chernovs, but actually they are just as much allies of Denikin and pawns in *his* game as the late Left Socialist-Revolutionary Muravyov, the ex-commander-in-chief, who for "ideological" reasons opened the front to the Czechoslovaks and to Kolchak.

Martov, Volsky and Co. fancy themselves "superior" to both contending sides; they fancy themselves capable of creating a "third side."

This desire, even when it is sincere, is an illusion of the petty-bourgeois democrat, who to this day, seventy years after 1848, has still not learned the most elementary thing, namely, that in a capitalist environment only the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible, and that no third course is possible. Martov and Co. evidently will die with this illusion. That is their affair. Our affair is to remember that in practice vacillations on the part of these people are inevitable, today in the direction of Denikin, to-morrow in the direction of the Bolsheviks. And today we must do the task of *this* day.

Our task is to put the question bluntly. What is preferable? To ferret out, to imprison, sometimes even to shoot hundreds of traitors from among the Cadets, non-Party people, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who "come out" (some with arms in hand, others with conspiracies, others still with agitation against mobilization, like the Menshevik printers and railwaymen, etc.) *against* the Soviet government, *in other words, in favour of Denikin*? Or to allow matters to reach a pass enabling Kolchak and Denikin to slaughter, shoot and flog to death tens of thousands of workers and peasants? The choice is not difficult to make.

That is how the question stands, and not otherwise.

Whoever has not yet understood this, whoever is capable of whining over the "injustice" of such a decision, must be given up as hopeless and held up to public ridicule and shame.

THE POPULATION MUST BE MOBILIZED FOR WAR TO A MAN

The Soviet Republic is a fortress besieged by world capital We can concede the right to use it as a refuge from Kolchak, and the right to live in it generally, only to those who take an active part in the war and help us in every way. From this follows our right and our duty to mobilize the whole population for the war to a man, some for military duties in the direct meaning of the term, others for subsidiary activities of every kind in aid of the war.

For its complete realization, this demands ideal organization. And since our government organization is very far from perfect (which is not in the least surprising in view of its youth and novelty and the extraordinary difficulties which accompany its development), to attempt at once on a wide scale to accomplish anything complete or even very considerable in this sphere would be a dangerous indulging in fantastic organizational schemes.

But much in a partial way to bring us nearer to this ideal can be done, and the "enterprise" shown by our Party and Soviet officials in this respect is very, very far from adequate.

It will suffice here to raise this question and to draw the attention of the comrades to it. There is no need to give any specific instructions or recommendations.

Let us only observe that the petty-bourgeois democrats who stand nearest to the Soviet regime and who call themselves, as the habit goes, Socialists—some of the "Left" Mensheviks and the like, for example—are particularly disposed to grow indignant at the, in their opinion, "barbaric" method of taking hostages.

Let them be indignant, but without it war cannot be waged, and when the danger grows acute the employment of this means must be extended and multiplied in every sense Not infrequently, for example, Menshevik or yellow printers, railwaymen of the "Upravlentsi"—(officials)—persuasion or who are secret profiteers, kulaks, the wealthy sections of the urban (and rural) population and similar elements look upon defence against Kolchak and Denikin with an infinitely criminal and infinitely brazen attitude of indifference which tends to pass into sabotage Lists of such groups must be drawn up (or they must be compelled themselves to form groups in which each answers for everybody), and not only put them to work digging trenches, as is sometimes practised, but assign to them the most diverse and comprehensive duties in material aid of the Red Army.

The fields of the Red Armymen will be better cultivated, the supply of

food, tobacco and other necessities to the Red Armymen will be placed on a better footing, the danger to the lives of thousands upon thousands of workers and peasants resulting even from one conspiracy, etc., will be considerably less if we employ this method more widely, more comprehensively and more skilfully.

"WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY STYLE"

Summing up what was said above, we arrive at a simple conclusion: what is demanded of all Communists, of all class-conscious workers and peasants, of everyone who does not want to see Kolchak and Denikin win, is an immediate and, in the course of the next few months, an extraordinary accession of energy; what is needed is "work in a revolutionary style."

If the starving, exhausted and worn-out Moscow railwaymen, both skilled and unskilled, could for the sake of victory over Kolchak, and until victory over him is complete, inaugurate "Communist subbotniks," work without pay for several hours a week and moreover develop an unprecedented productivity of labour, exceeding the usual productivity of labour many times over, this only goes to show that much, very much still can be done.

And we must do it.

Then we shall win.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE
RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

Published in the
Izvestia of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) No. 4,
July 9, 1919

LETTER TO THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE VICTORY OVER KOLCHAK

Comrades, the Red troops have liberated the entire Urals from Kolchak and have begun the liberation of Siberia The workers and peasants of the Urals and Siberia are enthusiastically welcoming the Soviet power, for it is sweeping away with an iron besom all the landlord and capitalist scum who ground down the people with exactions, humiliations, floggings and the restoration of tsarist oppression

Our general delight, our joy at the liberation of the Urals and the entry of the Red troops into Siberia should not be allowed to lull us into a sense of security The enemy is still far from being destroyed He has not even been definitely broken

Every effort must be made to drive Kolchak and the Japanese and the other alien marauders out of Siberia, and an even greater effort is needed to destroy the enemy and to prevent him from starting his marauding activities all over again

How is that to be done?

The harrowing experience of the Urals and Siberia, as well as the experience of all countries which have been through the torments of the four years of imperialist war must not be without its lessons for us

Here are the five chief lessons which all workers and peasants, all working people, must draw from this experience so as to insure ourselves against a repetition of the calamities of Kolchakism

First lesson In order to defend the power of the workers and peasants from the marauders, that is, from the landlords and capitalists, we need a powerful Red Army We have proved in actual deeds that we can create it, that we have learned to direct it and to vanquish the capitalists notwithstanding the lavish assistance in the way of arms and equipment they are receiving from the richest countries in the world The Bolsheviks have proved that in practice All workers and peasants—if they are enlightened—must place their faith in them, not on the strength of their word (for to believe a man on the strength of his word is foolish), but on the strength of the experience of millions upon millions of people in the Urals and Siberia The problem of combining the arming of the workers and peasants with a command of ex officers, who for the most part sympathize with the land

lords and capitalists, is a most difficult one. It can be solved only given splendid organizing ability, strict and enlightened discipline, and the confidence of the broad masses in the leading stratum, the workers' commissars. This most difficult problem the Bolsheviks have solved: cases of treachery on the part of ex-officers are very numerous, nevertheless the Red Army is not only in our hands, but has learned to defeat the generals of the tsar and the generals of Britain, France and America.

Consequently, everyone who seriously wishes to rid himself of Kolchakism must devote all his energies, means and ability without reservation to the task of building up and strengthening the Red Army. Obey all the laws on the Red Army and all orders conscientiously and scrupulously, support discipline in it in every way, and help the Red Army, each to the best of his ability—such is the prime, fundamental and principal duty of every enlightened worker and peasant who does not want Kolchakism.

Fear unruly partisanism, the arbitrary action of isolated detachments, disobedience towards the central authorities like the plague, for that leads to disaster. And the Urals, Siberia and the Ukraine have demonstrated that.

He who does not unreservedly and selflessly assist the Red Army, or support order and discipline in it with all his might is a traitor and treasonmonger, a supporter of Kolchakism, who should be exterminated without compunction.

With a strong Red Army we shall be invincible. Without a strong Red Army we shall inevitably fall victim to Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenich.

Second lesson. The Red Army cannot be strong without large government stocks of grain, for without them it is impossible to move an army freely or to train it properly. Without them we cannot feed the workers who are producing for the army.

Every enlightened worker and peasant must know and understand that the chief reason now for the insufficiently swift and stable successes of our Red Army is precisely a shortage of government stocks of grain. He who does not surrender his surpluses of grain to the government is helping Kolchak, he is a traitor and betrayer of the workers and peasants and is responsible for the unnecessary death and suffering of tens of thousands of workers and peasants in the Red Army.

Rogues and profiteers and utterly ignorant peasants argue in this way: Better sell my grain for a free price, I will get far more for it that way than the fixed price paid by the government.

But the whole point is that free sale promotes profiteering; a few get rich, only the wealthy are sated, while the working masses go hungry. We saw that for a fact in the richest grain-bearing districts of Siberia and the Ukraine.

Under the free sale of grain capital triumphs, while labour starves and suffers.

Under the free sale of grain the price rises to thousands of rubles per pood, money loses its value, a handful of profiteers benefit while the people grow poorer

Under the free sale of grain the government granaries are empty, the army is powerless, industry dies, and the victory of Kolchak and Denikin is inevitable

Only the rich, only the worst enemies of the workers' and peasants' government are deliberately in favour of the free sale of grain Those who out of ignorance are in favour of the free sale of grain should learn to understand from the example of Siberia and the Ukraine why the free sale of grain spells victory for Kolchak and Denikin

There are still unenlightened peasants who argue as follows Let the government first give me in exchange for my grain good wares at pre war prices, then I will give up my surplus grain, otherwise I will not And by this sort of argument too the rogues and supporters of the landlords often "hook" the unenlightened peasants on their line

It should not be difficult to understand that the workers' state which the capitalists thoroughly devastated by four years' of a predatory war for the sake of Constantinople, and which the Kolchaks and Denikins then devastated again out of sheer malice with the help of the capitalists of the whole world, cannot at this moment supply the peasants with goods, for industry is at a standstill There is no food, no fuel, no industry

Every sensible peasant will agree that the surplus grain must be given to the starving worker as a loan on condition of receiving industrial products in return

That is the way it is now All enlightened and sensible peasants, all except the rogues and profiteers will agree that *all surplus grain without exception* must be turned over to the workers' government as a loan, because then the government will be able to restore industry and supply industrial products to the peasants

But will the peasants trust the workers' government enough to loan their surplus grain to it?—we may be asked

Our reply is Firstly, the government gives a bond for the loan in the shape of currency Secondly, all peasants know by experience that the workers' government, that is, the Soviet government, helps the working people and fights the landlords and capitalists That is why the Soviet government is called a workers' and peasants' government Thirdly, the peasants have no other alternative either they trust the worker or they trust the capitalist, they give their confidence and a loan either to the workers' government or to the capitalist government There is no other alternative either in Russia or in any country in the world The more enlightened the peasants become, the firmer they stand by the workers, and the more resolute is their decision to help the workers' government in every way so as to make the return of the government of the landlords and capitalists impossible

Third lesson. If Kolchak and Denikin are to be utterly destroyed the strictest revolutionary order must be maintained, the laws and instructions of the Soviet government must be sacredly observed, and it must be seen to it that they are obeyed by all.

Kolchak's victories in Siberia and the Urals have been a clear example to all of us that the least disorder, the slightest infraction of the laws of the Soviet government, the slightest laxity or falling off of zeal at once serves to strengthen the landlords and capitalists and makes for their victory. For the landlords and capitalists have not been destroyed and do not consider themselves vanquished; every intelligent worker and peasant sees, knows and realizes that they have only been beaten and have gone into hiding, are lying low, often disguising themselves under a "Soviet" "protective" colouring. Many landlords have wormed their way into state farms, and capitalists into various "chief administrations" and "centres," acting the part of Soviet officials; they are watching every step of the Soviet government for it to make a mistake or show weakness, so as to overthrow it, to help the Czechoslovaks today and Denikin to-morrow.

Everything must be done to track down these bandits, these landlords and capitalists who are lying low, and to ferret them out, *no matter what guise they take*, to expose them and punish them ruthlessly, for they are most malignant foes of the working people, skilful, shrewd and experienced, who are patiently waiting for a convenient moment to set a conspiracy going; they are saboteurs, who stop at no crime to injure the Soviet regime. We must be merciless towards these enemies of the working people, towards the landlords, capitalists, saboteurs and Whites.

And in order to catch them we must be skilful, cautious and enlightened, we must be most attentive and watch out for the least disorder, for the slightest deviation from the conscientious observance of the laws of the Soviet government. The landlords and capitalists are strong not only because of their knowledge and experience and the assistance they get from the richest countries in the world, but also because of the force of habit and the ignorance of the broad masses, who want to live in the "good old way" and do not realize how essential it is that the laws of the Soviet government be strictly and conscientiously observed.

The least lawlessness, the least infraction of Soviet order is a *loophole*, of which the foes of the working people take immediate advantage, a *starting point* for Kolchak and Denikin victories. It would be criminal to forget that the Kolchak affair began with a slight incautiousness towards the Czechoslovaks, with a slight insubordination on the part of certain regiments.

Fourth lesson. It is not only criminal to forget that the Kolchak affair began with trifles; it must also not be forgotten that the Mensheviks and S.-R.'s ("Socialist-Revolutionaries") assisted its birth and directly supported it. It is time to judge political parties not by their words, but by their deeds.

The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries call themselves Socialists, but they are actually *abettors of the Whites*, abettors of the landlords and capitalists This was proved not only by isolated facts, but by two big periods in the history of the Russian revolution 1) the Kerensky period, and 2) the Kolchak period Both times the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries while professing to be "Socialists" and "democrats," actually played the role of *abettors of the Whiteguards* Are we then going to be so foolish as to believe them now that they are proposing again to permit them to 'have a try," and call that permission a "united Socialist (or democratic) front"? After the Kolchak affair, can there still be peasants, except for few isolated individuals, who do not realize that a "united front" with the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries means union with abettors of Kolchak?

It will be objected that the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries have seen their mistake and renounced all alliance with the bourgeoisie But that is not true In the first place, the Right Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries have not even renounced such an alliance, and there is *no* definite line of demarcation from these "Rights " There is no such line owing to the fault of the "Left" Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, for while verbally "condemning" their "Rights," even the best of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, in spite of all they say, are actually *impotent* compared with them Secondly, what even the best of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries advocate are actually *Kolchak* ideas, ideas which assist the bourgeoisie and Kolchak and Denikin and help to mask their vile and bloody capitalist deeds These ideas are a people s government, universal, equal and direct suffrage, a Constituent Assembly, freedom of the press, and the like All over the world we see capitalist republics which precisely by this lie of "democracy" justify capitalist rule and wars for the enslavement of colonies In our own country we see that Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich and any other general readily make such "democratic' promises Can we trust a man who on the strength of verbal promises helps a known bandit? The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, all without exception, help known bandits, the world imperialists, masking *their* power, *their* campaign against Russia, *their* rule, and *their* policy with pseudo democratic slogans All the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries offer us an "alliance" on condition that we make concessions to the capitalists and their leaders, Kolchak and Denikin as, for example, that we "renounce terror" (when against us is being applied the terror of the billionaires of the whole Entente, of the whole alliance of the richest countries, which are engineering plots in Russia), or that we open the road to freedom of trade in grain, and so on What these "conditions' of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries boil down to is this we, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, are wavering towards the capitalists, yet we want a "united front' with the Bolsheviks, whom the capitalists are fighting, taking advantage of every concession! No, Mes

sieurs the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, don't look for people capable of believing you in Russia any more. In Russia the enlightened workers and peasants now realize that the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are abettors of the Whiteguards, some wittingly and maliciously, others unwittingly and because they persist in their old mistakes; but they are all abettors of the Whiteguards nevertheless.

Fifth lesson. If Kolchak and his ilk are to be destroyed and not allowed to raise their heads again, all peasants must unhesitatingly cast their choice in favour of the workers' state. Some people (especially the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries—all of them, even the "Lefts" among them) are trying to scare the peasants with the bogey of the "dictatorship of one party," the party of Bolsheviks, Communists.

The peasants have learned from the case of Kolchak not to be terrified by this bogey.

Either the dictatorship (*i.e.*, the iron rule) of the landlords and capitalists, or the dictatorship of the working class.

There is no middle course. The scions of the aristocracy, the wretched intellectuals and the small masters, badly educated on bad books, dream of a middle course. There is no middle course anywhere in the world, and cannot be. Either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (masked by ornate Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik phrasemongering about a people's government, a constituent assembly, liberties, and the like), or the dictatorship of the proletariat. He who has not learned this from the whole history of the nineteenth century is a hopeless idiot. And we in Russia have all seen how the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries dreamed of a middle course under Kerensky and under Kolchak.

To whom were these dreams of service? Whom did they assist? Kolchak and Denikin. Those who dream of a middle course are abettors of Kolchak.

In the Urals and Siberia the workers and peasants had the opportunity to compare the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the working class. The dictatorship of the working class is being carried out by the Bolshevik Party, the Party which as far back as 1905 and earlier merged with the entire revolutionary proletariat.

Dictatorship of the working class means that the workers' state will unhesitatingly suppress the landlords and capitalists and the renegades and traitors who help these exploiters, and will vanquish them.

The workers' state is an implacable enemy of the landlord and capitalist, of the profiteer and swindler, an enemy of private ownership of land and capital, an enemy of the power of money.

The workers' state is the only loyal friend and coadjutor of the working people and the peasantry. No wavering towards capital, an alliance of the working people to fight it, *workers' and peasants' rule*, *Soviet rule*—that is what the "dictatorship of the working class" means *in practice*.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries want to scare the peasants with these words. They won't succeed. After Kolchak, the workers and peasants even in the deepest backwoods realize that these words mean *precisely that without which there can be no salvation from Kolchak*.

Down with the waverers, with the spineless ones, who are erring in the direction of helping capital and have been captivated by the slogans and promises of capital! An implacable struggle against capital, and an alliance of the working people, an alliance of the peasants and the working class—that is the last and most important lesson of the Kolchak affair.

Written August 24, 1919

Printed in *Pravda* No. 190
August 28, 1919

THE WORKERS' STATE AND PARTY WEEK

Party Week,—in Moscow,—falls at a difficult time for the Soviet power. Denikin's successes have given rise to a frenzied increase of plotting on the part of the landlords, capitalists and their friends, and increased efforts on the part of the bourgeoisie to sow panic and undermine the strength of the Soviet regime by every means in their power. The vacillating, wavering, unenlightened petty bourgeois, and with them the intelligentsia, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, have, as might have been expected, become more wobbly than ever and were the first to allow themselves to be intimidated by the capitalists.

But I consider that the fact that Party Week in Moscow falls at such a difficult time is rather an advantage to us, for it is much better for the cause. We do not need Party Week for show purposes. Fictitious Party members are no good to us even as a gift. Our Party, the Party of the revolutionary working class, is the only government party in the world which is concerned not in increasing its membership but in improving its quality, and in purging itself of "self-seekers." We have repeatedly carried out re-registration of Party members in order to get rid of these "self-seekers" and to leave in the Party only politically enlightened elements who are sincerely devoted to Communism. We have further taken advantage of the mobilizations for the front and the subbotniks to purge the Party of those who are only "out for" the benefits accruing to membership of a government party and are averse to bearing the burden of self-sacrificing work on behalf of Communism.

And at this juncture, when energetic mobilization for the front is in progress, Party Week is a good thing because it offers no temptation to the self-seekers. We extend a broad invitation into the Party only to the rank-and-file workers and to the poor peasants, to the labouring peasants, *but not* to the peasant profiteers. We do not promise and do not offer these rank-and-file members any advantages from joining the Party. On the contrary, just now harder and more dangerous work than usual falls to the lot of Party members. All the better. Only sincere supporters of Communism, only persons who are conscientiously devoted to the workers' state, only honest working people, only genuine representatives of the masses who were oppressed under capitalism will join the Party. And it is only such members that we need in the Party.

We need new Party members not for advertisement purposes but for serious work. These are the people we invite into the Party. To the working people we throw its doors wide open.

The Soviet power is the power of the working people fighting for the complete overthrow of the yoke of capital. The first to rise up for this fight was the working class of the towns and the factory centres. It won its first victory and conquered state power.

It is winning the support of the majority of the peasants. For it is only the peasant huckster, the peasant profiteer, and not the labouring peasant that is drawn to the side of capital, to the side of the bourgeoisie.

It is the most advanced, the most politically enlightened workers, the workers of Petrograd, that have been giving most of their strength to the administration of Russia. But we know that among the rank-and-file workers and peasants there are ever so many people devoted to the interests of the working masses and fit for the work of leadership. Among them there are very many with a talent for organization and administration to whom capitalism gave no opportunity and whom we are helping and must help in every way to come to the fore and take up the work of building Socialism. To discover these new, modest and unperceived talents is no easy matter. It is no easy matter to enlist in the work of state rank-and-file workers and peasants who for centuries had been downtrodden and intimidated by the landlords and capitalists.

But although it is not easy it must be done, and it has to be done, so as to draw more deeply on the working class and the labouring peasantry for new forces.

Comrades, non-party workers and labouring peasants, join the Party! We promise you no advantages from doing so, it is hard work, the work of state building, we are calling you to. If you are sincere supporters of Communism, set about this work boldly, do not fear its novelty and the difficulty it entails, do not be put off by the old prejudice that only those who have received formal training are capable of this work.

That is not true. The work of building Socialism can and must be directed by rank-and-file workers and labouring peasants in ever growing numbers.

The mass of the working people are with us. That is where our strength lies. That is the source of the invincibility of world Communism. More new workers from among the masses for the ranks of the Party for the purpose of taking an independent part in building the new life—that is our method of combating all difficulties, that is our path to victory.

October 11, 1919

Pravda No. 228,
October 12, 1919

TO THE RED ARMYMEN

Comrades, Red Armymen! The tsarist generals—Yudenich in the north and Denikin in the south—are once again making an effort to vanquish the Soviet government and restore the power of the tsar, the landlords and the capitalists.

We know how a similar attempt by Kolchak ended. He did not succeed in deceiving the workers of the Urals and the peasants of Siberia for long. Having seen through the deception and having suffered endless violence, floggings and robbery at the hands of the officers, the offspring of the landlords and capitalists, the workers of the Urals and the peasants of Siberia helped our Red Army to defeat Kolchak. The Orenburg Cossacks came straight over to the side of the Soviet government.

That is why we are firmly confident in victory over Yudenich and Denikin. They will not succeed in restoring the power of the tsar and the landlords. That will never be! The peasants are already rising in Denikin's rear. The flames of revolt against Denikin are burning brightly in the Caucasus. The Kuban Cossacks are grumbling and stirring to action, dissatisfied with Denikin's violence and robbery on behalf of the landlords and the English.

Let us then be firm, comrades Red Armymen! The workers and peasants are rallying ever more solidly, consciously and resolutely to the side of the Soviet government.

Forward, comrades Red Armymen, to the fight for the workers' and peasants' government, against the landlords and the tsarist generals! Victory will be ours!

N. Lenin

October 19, 1919

Krasnoarmeyetz (*Red Armyman*) No. 10-15,
October, 1919

ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IN THE ERA OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

I had intended in connection with the second anniversary of the Sovi[illegible] power to write a small pamphlet dealing with the subject indicated [illegible] the title But owing to the rush of everyday work I have been unable [illegible] far to get beyond the preliminary preparations for certain of the section[illegible] I have therefore decided to try the experiment of a brief, summarized e[illegible] position of what, in my opinion, are the chief thoughts on the subjec[illegible] A summarized exposition, of course, possesses many disadvantages an[illegible] shortcomings But perhaps for a short article in a journal a modest ai[illegible] will nevertheless prove achievable, namely, to present a statement of th[illegible] problem and the groundwork for its discussion by the Communists in th[illegible] various countries

I

Theoretically, there can be no doubt that between capitalism and Con[illegible] munism there lies a definite transition period The latter cannot but com[illegible] bine the features and properties of both these systems of social enterpris[illegible] This transition period cannot but be a period of struggle between moribun[illegible] capitalism and nascent Communism—in other words, between capitalis[illegible] which has been defeated but not yet destroyed and Communism which h[illegible] been born but which is still very feeble

The necessity for a whole historical era distinguished by these featur[illegible] of a transition period should be obvious not only to a Marxist, but to eve[illegible] educated person who is in any degree acquainted with the theory of d[illegible] velopment Yet all the talk on the subject of the transition to Socialis[illegible] which we hear from present day representatives of petty bourgeois demo[illegible] racy (and such, in spite of their spurious Socialist label, are all the repr[illegible] sentatives of the Second International, including such individuals [illegible] MacDonald, Jean Longuet, Kautsky and Friedrich Adler) is marked b[illegible] complete obliviousness to this obvious truth Petty bourgeois democra[illegible] are distinguished by an aversion to the class struggle, by the hope [illegible] getting along without the class struggle, by their endeavour to smoo[illegible] over and reconcile, and to take the edge off sharp corners Such democra[illegible] therefore either avoid recognizing the necessity for a whole historic[illegible]

period of transition from capitalism to Communism or regard it as their duty to concoct plans for reconciling the two contending forces, instead of leading the struggle of one of these forces against the other.

II

In Russia, the dictatorship of the proletariat must inevitably differ in certain particulars from that in the advanced countries, owing to the very great backwardness and petty-bourgeois character of our country. But the basic forces—and the basic forms of social economy—are the same in Russia as in any capitalist country, so that these peculiarities can apply to only what is not most important.

These basic forms of social economy are capitalism, petty commodity production and Communism. The basic forces are the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie (particularly the peasantry) and the proletariat.

The economic system of Russia in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat represents a struggle of the first steps of labour communistically united—within the bounds of a single vast state—against petty commodity production and capitalism, which has been preserved and is also reviving on the basis of petty commodity production.

In Russia, labour is united communistically for the reason that, firstly, private ownership in the means of production has been abolished, and, secondly, the proletarian state power is organizing large-scale production on state-owned land and in state-owned enterprises on a national scale, is distributing labour power among the various branches of production and the various enterprises, and is distributing to the toilers large quantities of articles of consumption belonging to the state.

We say "the first steps" of Communism in Russia (so spoken of also in the program of our Party adopted in March 1919), because all these conditions have been only partially achieved in our country, or, to put it otherwise, the achievement of these conditions is only in its early stages. We accomplished instantly, at one revolutionary blow, all that can be instantly accomplished in general: for instance, on the first day of the dictatorship of the proletariat, October 26 [November 8], 1917, private property in land was abolished without compensation to the large owners; the large landowners were expropriated. Within the space of a few months practically all the large capitalists, owners of mills and factories, joint-stock companies, banks, railways, and so forth, were also expropriated without compensation. The state organization of large-scale production in industry and the transition from "workers' control" to "workers' administration" of factories, mills and railways—that, in the main, has already been accomplished; but in relation to agriculture it had only just begun ("state farms," *i.e.*, large farms organized by the workers' state on state-owned land). Similarly, we have only just begun the organization of various forms of co-operative societies of small husbandmen as a transition from petty commodity

agriculture to Communist agriculture.* The same must be said of the state organization of the distribution of products in place of private trade, *i.e.*, the state collection and state delivery of grain to the cities and of industrial products to the countryside. Available statistical data on this question will be given below.

Peasant farming continues to be petty commodity production. Here we have an extremely broad and profoundly and firmly rooted basis for capitalism. On this basis capitalism has been preserved and is again reviving, locked in a bitter struggle with Communism. The forms of this struggle are bag-trading and profiteering, as against the state collection of grain (and other products) and the state distribution of products in general.

III

We shall cite concrete data in illustration of these abstract theoretical propositions.

According to the figures of Komprod (the People's Commissariat of Food), state collections of grain in Russia between August 1, 1917, and August 1, 1918, amounted to about 30,000,000 poods and in the following year to about 110,000,000 poods. During the first three months of the next collection campaign (1919-20) the total collections will presumably attain to about 45,000,000 poods, as against 37,000,000 poods for the same months (August-October) in 1918.

These figures obviously speak of a slow but steady improvement in the state of affairs from the point of view of the victory of Communism over capitalism. This improvement is being achieved in spite of the incredible difficulties of the civil war which is being organized by Russian and foreign capitalists, harnessing all the forces of the strongest powers in the world.

Therefore, in spite of the lies and slanders of the bourgeoisie of all countries and of their confessed and unconfessed henchmen (the "Socialists" of the Second International), one thing remains beyond dispute, *viz.*, that from the point of view of the basic economic problems, the victory of Communism over capitalism is assured for our dictatorship of the proletariat. All over the world the bourgeoisie is raging and fuming against Bolshevism and is organizing military expeditions, plots, etc., against the Bolsheviks just because it fully realizes that our success in reconstructing our social economy is inevitable, that is, provided we are not crushed by military force. And they are not managing to crush us in this way.

The extent of our success over capitalism in the short time we have had at our disposal, and amidst the incredible difficulties under which

* The number of state farms and agricultural communes in Soviet Russia amounts to approximately 3,536 and 1,961 respectively, and the number of "agricultural artels" to 3,696. Our Central Statistical Board is at present making an exact census of all state farms and communes. The results will begin to become available in November 1919.

we have been obliged to function, will be seen from the following summarized figures. The Central Statistical Board has just prepared statistics for the press regarding the production and consumption of grain, not, it is true, for the whole of Soviet Russia, but for twenty-six of her provinces.

The results are as follows:

Provinces of Soviet Russia	Population, in Millions		Production of grain (excluding seed and fodder), in millions of poods	Grain delivered, in millions of poods		Total amount of grain at disposal of population, in millions of poods	Grain consumption per *capita* of population, in poods
				Commissariat of Food	Profiteers		
Producing provinces	Urban	4.4	—	20.9	20.6	41.5	9.5
	Rural	28.6	625.4	—	—	481.8	16.9
Consuming provinces	Urban	5.9	—	20.0	20.0	40.0	6.8
	Rural	13.8	114.0	12.1	27.8	151.4	11.0
Total—(26 provinces)		—52.7	739.4	53.0	68.4	714.7	13.6

Thus, approximately half the amount of grain supplied to the cities is provided by the Commissariat of Food and the other half by the profiteers. This same proportion is revealed by a careful investigation, made in 1918, of the food consumed by city workers. In this connection it should be borne in mind that for bread supplied by the state the worker pays *one-ninth* of what he pays the profiteer. The profiteering price for bread is *ten times* greater than the state price. That is what is revealed by a careful investigation of workers' budgets.

IV

If one carefully reflects on the figures quoted, one finds that they present an exact picture of the fundamental features of present-day economy in Russia.

The toilers have been emancipated from the age-old oppressors and exploiters, the landlords and the capitalists. This step in the direction of real freedom and real equality, a step which for its extent, its size, its rapidity, is without parallel in the world, is ignored by the followers of the bourgeoisie (including the petty-bourgeois democrats), who talk of freedom and equality, meaning parliamentary bourgeois democracy, which they falsely declare to be "democracy" in general, or "pure democracy" (Kautsky).

But the toilers are concerned only with real equality and with real freedom (freedom from the landlords and the capitalists), and that is why they stand so firmly for Soviet power

In this peasant country it was the peasants as a whole who were the first to gain, who gained the most and gained immediately from the dictatorship of the proletariat The peasant in Russia starved under the landlords and the capitalists Throughout the long centuries of our history, the peasant has never yet had the opportunity of working for himself he starved, while surrendering hundreds of millions of poods of grain to the capitalists, for the cities and for foreign delivery It was under the dictatorship of the proletariat that the peasant *for the first time* worked for himself and *fed better than the city dweller* The peasant has seen real freedom for the first time—freedom to eat his bread, freedom from starvation In the distribution of the land, as we know, equality has been established to a maximum degree in the vast majority of cases the peasants are dividing the land according to the number of "mouths"*

Socialism means the abolition of classes

In order to abolish classes one must, firstly, overthrow the landlords and capitalists That part of our task has been accomplished, but it is only a part, and moreover, *not* the most difficult part In order to abolish classes one must, secondly, abolish the difference between workingman and peasant *one must make them all workers* This cannot be done all at once This task is incomparably more difficult and will of necessity be a protracted one This task cannot be accomplished by overthrowing a class It can be solved only by the organizational reconstruction of the whole social economy, by a transition from individual, disunited, petty commodity production to large scale social enterprise This transition must of necessity be extremely protracted This transition may only be delayed and complicated by hasty and incautious administrative legislation The transition can be accelerated only by affording such assistance to the peasant as will enable him to improve his whole technique of agriculture immeasurably, to reform it radically

In order to solve the second and most difficult part of the problem, the proletariat, after having defeated the bourgeoisie, must unswervingly conduct its policy towards the peasantry along the following fundamental lines the proletariat must separate demarcate the peasant toiler from the peasant owner, the peasant worker from the peasant huckster, the peasant who labours from the peasant who profiteers

In this demarcation lies the *whole essence* of Socialism

And it is not surprising that the Socialists in word but petty bourgeois democrats in deed (the Martovs, the Chernovs, the Kautskys, and so on) do not understand this essence of Socialism

* *I e* the number of individuals belonging to each peasant household —*Ed*

The demarcation we here refer to is extremely difficult, for in actual life all the features of the "peasant," however different they may be, however contradictory they may be, are fused into one whole. Nevertheless, demarcation is possible; not only is it possible, but it inevitably follows from the conditions of peasant economy and peasant life. The toiling peasant has for ages been oppressed by the landlords, the capitalists, the hucksters and the profiteers and by *their* state, including even the most democratic bourgeois republics. Throughout the ages the toiling peasant has cherished hatred and enmity towards the oppressors and the exploiters, and this "education," engendered by the conditions of life, *compel* the peasant to seek for an alliance with the workers against the capitalist and against the profiteer and trader. Yet at the same time, economic conditions, the conditions of commodity production, inevitably turn the peasant (not always, but in the vast majority of cases) into a huckster and profiteer.

The statistics quoted above reveal a striking difference between the peasant toiler and the peasant profiteer. That peasant who during 1918-19 delivered to the hungry workers of the cities 40,000,000 poods of grain at fixed state prices, who delivered this grain to the state organs in spite of all the shortcomings of the latter, shortcomings which are fully realized by the workers' government, but which are unavoidable in the first period of the transition to Socialism, that peasant is a toiling peasant, a comrade on an equal footing with the Socialist worker, his faithful ally, his own brother in the fight against the yoke of capital. Whereas that peasant who clandestinely sold 40,000,000 poods of grain at ten times the state price, taking advantage of the need and hunger of the city worker, deceiving the state, everywhere increasing and creating deceit, robbery and fraud—that peasant is a profiteer, the ally of the capitalist, the class enemy of the worker, an exploiter. For whoever possesses a surplus of grain gathered from land belonging to the whole state with the help of implements in which in one way or another is embodied the labour not only of the peasant but also of the worker and so on, whoever possesses a surplus of grain and profiteers in that grain is an exploiter of the hungry worker.

You are violators of freedom, equality and democracy—they shout at us on all hands, pointing to the inequality of the worker and the peasant under our constitution, to the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly, to the forcible confiscation of surplus grain, and so forth. We reply: Never in the world has there been a state which has done so much to remove the actual inequality, the actual lack of freedom from which the toiling peasant has suffered for centuries. But we shall never recognize equality with the peasant profiteer, just as we do not recognize "equality" between the exploiter and the exploited, between the full and the hungry, and the "freedom" of the former to rob the latter. And those educated people who refuse to recognize this difference we shall treat as Whiteguards, even though they may call themselves democrats, Socialists, internationalists, Kautskys, Chernovs and Martovs.

V

Socialism means the abolition of classes The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could to abolish classes But classes cannot be abolished all at once

And classes *remain* and *will remain* in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat When classes disappear the dictatorship will become unnecessary Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear

Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat *every* class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat, it merely assumes different forms

Under capitalism the proletariat was an oppressed class, a class deprived of all ownership in the means of production it was the only class which stood directly and completely opposed to the bourgeoisie, and therefore it alone was capable of being revolutionary to the very end Having overthrown the bourgeoisie and conquered political power, the proletariat has become the *ruling* class, it holds the power of the state, it has the disposal of the means of production, which have now become social it leads the wavering and intermediary elements and classes, it crushes the growing energy of resistance of the exploiters All these are *specific* tasks of the class struggle, tasks which the proletariat formerly did not set itself, and could not have set itself

The class of exploiters, the landlords and capitalists, has not disappeared under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and it cannot disappear all at once The exploiters have been smashed, but not destroyed They still have an international base in the form of international capital, a branch of which they represent They still retain a part of the means of production, they still have money, they still have vast social connections Just because they have been defeated, their energy of resistance has increased a hundred and thousandfold The 'art" of state, military and economic administration gives them a superiority, and a very great superiority, so that their importance is incomparably greater than their numerical strength among the population would warrant The class struggle waged by the overthrown exploiters against the triumphant vanguard of the exploited, *i e* , against the proletariat, has become incomparably more bitter And it cannot be otherwise in the case of a revolution, if this conception is not replaced (as it is by all the heroes of the Second International) by reformist illusions

Finally, the peasantry, like the petty bourgeoisie in general, occupies a halfway, intermediary position *even* under the dictatorship of the proletariat on the one hand, it consists of a fairly large (and in backward Russia vast) mass of toilers united by the common aim of the toilers to emancipate themselves from the landlord and the capitalist, on the other hand, it consists of disunited small masters, property owners and traders Such an economic position inevitably causes vacillations between the

proletariat and the bourgeoisie. And in view of the acute form which the struggle between these latter has assumed, in view of the incredibly severe break-up of all social relations, and in view of the great attachment of the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie generally to the old, the routine and the unchangeable, it is only natural that we should inevitably find them swinging from one side to the other, that we should find them wavering, changeable, uncertain, and so on.

The task of the proletariat in relation to this class—or to these social elements—is to lead it and to strive to establish its influence over it. The proletariat must lead the vacillating and unstable.

If we compare all the basic forces and classes and their interrelations, as modified by the dictatorship of the proletariat, we shall realize how unutterably nonsensical and theoretically stupid is the common petty-bourgeois idea, shared by all representatives of the Second International, that the transition to Socialism is possible "by means of democracy" in general. The fundamental source of this error lies in the prejudice inherited from the bourgeoisie as to the absolute, classless meaning of "democracy." As a matter of fact, democracy itself passes into an entirely new phase under the dictatorship of the proletariat, while the class struggle is raised to a higher level and dominates over each and every form.

General talk about freedom, equality and democracy is in fact but a stereotyped repetition of conceptions which are only a cast from the relations of commodity production. To attempt to solve the concrete problems of the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of such general talk is to accept the theories and principles of the bourgeoisie all along the line. From the point of view of the proletariat, the question can be put only in the following way: freedom from the oppression of which class? equality between which classes? democracy based on private property, or on the struggle for the abolition of private property?—and so forth.

Long ago Engels in his *Anti-Dühring* explained that the conception of equality is a cast from the relations of commodity production and becomes transformed into a prejudice if equality is not understood to mean the *abolition of classes*. This elementary truth regarding the distinction between the bourgeois democratic and the Socialist conceptions of equality is constantly being forgotten. But if it is not forgotten, it becomes obvious that by overthrowing the bourgeoisie the proletariat takes a decisive step towards the abolition of classes, and that in order to complete the process the proletariat must continue its class struggle, making use of the apparatus of state power and of all methods of combating, influencing and bringing pressure to bear on the overthrown bourgeoisie and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie. *(To be continued)**

October 30, 1919

First published in the *Communist International* No. 6, November 7, 1919

* The article was not completed.—*Ed.*

THE FUEL CRISIS AND HOW TO END IT

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

Comrades, to our Party, as the organized vanguard of the proletariat, has fallen the duty of organizing the working class in its struggle and of leading its fight for the victory of the Soviet power of the workers and peasants. Having triumphantly carried on that fight for two years, we now know by what means we succeeded in overcoming the incredible difficulties caused by the impoverishment of the country as the result of four years of imperialist war and the resistance of all exploiters, Russian and international.

Comrades, the chief source of our strength is the enlightenment and heroism of the workers, whom the labouring peasants could not and cannot but sympathize with and support. The reason for our victories was the direct appeal of our Party and of the Soviet government to the working masses, pointing to every new difficulty and problem as it arose, its ability to explain to the masses why it was necessary to devote all our energies first to one, then to another aspect of Soviet work at any given moment; its ability to rouse the energy, heroism and enthusiasm of the masses and to concentrate our strained revolutionary efforts on the most important task of the hour.

Comrades, at this juncture the most important task of the hour is to end the fuel crisis. We are finishing off Kolchak, we have vanquished Yudenich, we have begun a successful offensive against Denikin. We have considerably improved matters as regards the collection and storage of grain. But the fuel crisis threatens to disrupt all Soviet work: workers and office employees are running away to escape cold and hunger, trains carrying grain are brought to a standstill, and real disaster is impending solely on account of the fuel shortage.

The fuel problem has become the central problem. The fuel crisis must be overcome at all costs, otherwise it will be impossible to solve the food problem, or the war problem, or the general economic problem.

And the fuel crisis can be overcome. For although we have lost the coal of the Donbas, and although we are not in a position rapidly to increase the output of coal in the Urals and Siberia, we still have plenty of forests and we can cut and bring out a sufficient quantity of wood.

The fuel crisis can be overcome. The thing now is to concentrate our main forces against (what is at present) our main enemy: the fuel shortage. We must arouse enthusiasm in the working masses and achieve a revolutionary harnessing of energies for the swiftest possible procurement and delivery of the largest possible quantity of fuel of every kind—coal, shale, peat, etc., and in the first place wood, wood and wood.

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party is confident that all Party organizations and all Party members, who in the past two years have demonstrated their capacity and ability to solve problems no less and even more difficult in a revolutionary way, will solve this problem too.

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party proposes in particular the following measures to all Party organizations:

1. All Party organizations must henceforth make the fuel problem and measures to end the fuel crisis a permanent item on the agenda of Party meetings and especially meetings of Party committees. What can still be done, what must be done to end the fuel crisis, how can the work be intensified, how can it be made more productive?—let these questions now occupy the attention of all Party organizations.

2. The same applies to all provincial executive committees, urban executive committees, district executive committees, rural district executive committees—in a word to all leading Soviet bodies. Party people must assume the initiative in strengthening, coordinating and intensifying the work on a country-wide scale.

3. The widest possible propaganda must be carried on everywhere, especially in the countryside, to explain what the fuel problem means to the Soviet power. In particular, local, parochial, narrow egoistical interests in the matter of fuel must be combated. It must be explained that without self-sacrificing effort to meet the general need of the state it will be impossible to save the Soviet Republic or uphold the power of the peasants and workers.

4. The most careful supervision must be exercised over the way the assignments of the Party and the instructions, demands and commissions of the Soviet government are carried out. New members of the Party who joined during the last Party Week should all be enlisted in the work of supervising how each and everyone is performing his duties.

5. Compulsory labour service for the whole population must be introduced, or certain age categories must be mobilized as quickly as possible and in the most imperative fashion for the work of procuring and carting coal and shale or cutting wood and carting it to the railway stations. Fix labour quotas and see that they are carried out at all costs. Punish with ruthless severity those who despite repeated insistence, demands and orders are found to have shirked the work. Any lenience or weakness would be a crime toward the revolution.

We have raised discipline in the army We must also raise labour discipline

6 Subbotniks must be arranged more frequently, energetically and systematically and better organized, and in the first place for fuel work Party members must set an example to all in labour discipline and energy Decisions of the Council of People's Commissars, of the Council of Defence and of other central, as well as local Soviet bodies on the fuel question must be carried out conscientiously and scrupulously

7 Local fuel bodies must be reinforced with the best of the Party workers For this purpose the distribution of forces should be revised and appropriate changes made

8 Comrades sent from the centre must be given the utmost assistance and the largest possible number of young forces must be trained—and practically trained at that—in organizing, arranging and running fuel work The local press must devote more attention to this work and must take pains to bring to the public attention examples of really fine work and wage an implacable campaign against backwardness, lack of zeal or lack of ability displayed by any particular district, department or institution Our press must become an instrument for bringing the backward into line and for inculcating industry, labour discipline and organization

9 The chief task of the food bodies must be to supply food and fodder for those engaged on fuel work Every assistance must be given them, their work must be intensified, and a check kept on the way it is carried out

10 Indefatigable efforts must be made to secure that in every fuel body (as in every Soviet institution generally) *everyone* is held *personally* responsible for a definite, strictly and precisely defined job, or part of a job Committee discussion must be reduced to an absolute minimum and never be allowed to interfere with swiftness and firmness of decision or minimize the responsibility of each and every worker

11 The clerical work connected with fuel matters must be particularly prompt and accurate The slightest tendency towards red tape must be punished ruthlessly Reporting to the centre must be put on exemplary lines

12 All fuel work in general must be organized in military fashion, with the same energy, speed and strict discipline as is demanded in war Without that we shall never overcome the fuel shortage Without it we shall not escape from the fuel crisis

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party is confident that all comrades will bend every effort to carry out these instructions energetically and faithfully

The fuel shortage must be fought and overcome!

Pravda No 254
November 13, 1919

SPEECH AT THE FIRST CONGRESS OF AGRICULTURAL COMMUNES AND AGRICULTURAL ARTELS

DECEMBER 4, 1919

Comrades, I am very glad to greet, on behalf of the government, your first congress of agricultural communes and agricultural artels. Of course, from all the activities of the Soviet government you know what tremendous significance we attach to the communes, artels and all organizations generally that aim at transforming and gradually assisting the transformation of small, individual peasant farming into social, co-operative or artel farming. You are aware that the Soviet government has long ago assigned a fund of one billion rubles to assist efforts of this kind. The statutes on Socialist agrarian measures particularly stress the significance of communes, artels and all enterprises for the social cultivation of the land, and the Soviet government is exerting every effort in order that this law shall not remain a paper law, and that it shall really produce the benefits it is intended to produce. The importance of enterprises of this kind is tremendous, because if the old, poverty-stricken peasant husbandry remained unchanged there could be no question of building up a stable Socialist society. Only if we succeed in proving to the peasants in practice the advantages of common, collective, co-operative, artel cultivation of the soil, only if we succeed in helping the peasant by means of co-operative or artel farming, will the working class, which holds the state power, be really able to convince the peasant of the correctness of its policy and to secure the real and durable following of the millions of peasants. It is therefore impossible to exaggerate the importance of every measure intended to encourage co-operative, artel forms of agriculture. We have millions of individual farms in our country, scattered and dispersed throughout remote rural districts. It would be absolutely absurd to attempt to reshape these farms in any rapid way, by issuing an order or bringing pressure to bear from without. We fully realize that one can influence the millions of small peasant farms only gradually and cautiously and only by a successful practical example. For the peasants are far too practical and cling far too tenaciously to the old methods of agriculture to consent to any serious change merely on the basis of

advice or the indications contained in books. That is impossible, ay, and it would be absurd. Only when it is proved in practice, by experience comprehensible to the peasants, that the transition to the co-operative, artel form of agriculture is essential and possible, shall we be entitled to say that in this vast peasant country, Russia, an important step towards Socialist agriculture has been taken. Consequently, the vast importanc that attaches to communes, artels and co-operative farms lays on all of you tremendous state and Socialist obligations and naturally compels the Soviet government and its representatives to treat this question with especial attention and caution.

In our law on Socialist agrarian measures it is stated that we consider it the absolute duty of all co-operative, artel agricultural enterprises not to isolate and sever themselves from the surrounding peasant population, but to afford them definite assistance. This is stipulated in the law, it is repeated in the rules of the communes, and it is being constantly developed in the instructions of our Commissariat of Agriculture—and that is the most important thing. But the whole point is to find a really practical method of putting this into effect. I am still not convinced that we have overcome this principal difficulty. And I should like your congress, at which practical workers in collective farming from all parts of Russia have the opportunity of sharing their experience, to put an end to all doubts and to prove that we are mastering, are beginning to master in practice, the task of consolidating the artels, co-operative farms and communes and every form of enterprise for collective and social agriculture generally. But in order to prove this, real, *practical* results are required.

When we read the rules of the agricultural communes, or books devoted to this question, it might appear that we devote too much space in them to propaganda and the theoretical justification of the necessity of organizing communes. Of course that is necessary, for without detailed propaganda, without explaining the advantages of co-operative agriculture, and without repeating this idea thousands and thousands of times we cannot expect interest to be aroused among the broad masses of peasants and a practical test to be undertaken of the methods of carrying it into effect. Of course, propaganda is necessary, and there is no need to fear repetition, for what may appear to us to be repetition is most likely for hundreds and thousands of peasants not repetition, but a truth revealed for the first time. And if it should occur to us that we are devoting too much attention to propaganda, it must be said that we ought to devote a hundred times more attention to it. And when I say this, I mean it in the sense that if we go to the peasant with general explanations of the advantages of organizing agricultural communes, and at the same time are unable in actual fact to point to the practical advantage that will accrue to him from co-operative, artel farms, he will not have the slightest confidence in our propaganda.

The law says that the communes, artels and co-operative farms mus assist the surrounding peasant population. But the state, the workers government, is providing a fund of a billion rubles for the purpose o assisting the agricultural communes and artels. And, of course, if any commune were to assist the peasants out of this fund I am afraid it would only arouse ridicule among the peasants. And it would be absolutely justified. Every peasant will say: "It goes without saying that if you are getting a fund of a billion rubles it means nothing to you to throw a little our way." I am afraid the peasant will only jeer, for he regards this matter very attentively and very distrustfully. The peasant has been accustomed for centuries to expect only oppression from the state power, and he is therefore in the habit of regarding everything that comes out of the state treasury with suspicion. And if the assistance given by the agricultural communes to the peasants will be given merely for the purpose of fulfilling the letter of the law, such assistance will be not only useless but harmful. For the name "agricultural commune" is a great one; it is associated with the conception of Communism. It will be a good thing if the communes in practice show that they are indeed seriously working for the improvement of peasant husbandry; that will undoubtedly increase the authority of the Communists and the Communist Party. But it has frequently happened that the communes have only succeeded in provoking an attitude of hostility, and the word "commune" has even at times become a call to fight Communism. And this happened not only when stupid attempts were made to drive the peasants into the communes by force. The absurdity of this was so obvious that the Soviet government long ago forbade it. And I hope that if isolated examples of such coercion are to be met with now, they are very few, and that you will take advantage of the present congress to see to it that the last trace of this outrage is swept from the face of the Soviet Republic, and that the surrounding peasant population may not be able to point to a single instance in support of the old opinion that membership of a commune is in one way or another associated with coercion.

But even if we eliminate this old shortcoming and completely obliterate this outrage it will still be only a small fraction of what has to be done. For the necessity of the state helping the communes will still remain, and we would not be Communists and believers in introducing Socialist economy if we did not give state aid to every kind of collective agricultural enterprise. We are obliged to do so for the added reason that it is in accordance with all our aims, and because we know that these co-operatives, artels and collective organizations are innovations, and if support is not given them by the working class in power they will not take root. In order that they should take root, and in view of the fact that the state is affording them monetary and every other kind of support, we must see to it that this does not provoke the ridicule of the peasants. What we must be most careful about is that the peasants should not say of the

communards and members of artels and co operatives that they are state pensioners, that they differ from the peasants only by the fact that they are receiving privileges If we are to give land and subsidies for construction purposes out of the billion ruble fund, any fool will live somewhat better than the ordinary peasant What is there communistic here, the peasant will ask, and where is the improvement? What are we to respect them for?—If you pick out a few score, or a few hundred individuals and give them billions, of course they will work

Such an attitude on the part of the peasants is most to be feared, and I should like to draw the attention of the comrades assembled at the congress to this question It must be solved practically, so as to enable us to say that we have not only averted this danger, but have also found means whereby the peasant will not be led to think in this way, but will, on the contrary, find in every commune and artel something which the state power is assisting, will find in them new methods of agriculture which show their advantages over the old methods not by books and speeches—that is not worth much—but in practice Therein lies the difficulty of the problem, and that is why it is hard for us, who have only dry figures before us, to judge whether we have proved in practice that every commune and every artel is really superior to every enterprise of the old system and that the workers government is here helping the peasant.

I think that, practically, it would be very desirable for the solution of this problem if you, who have a practical acquaintance with a number of neighbouring communes, artels and co operatives, worked out the methods of exercising real and practical control over the carrying out of the law which demands that the agricultural communes should give assistance to the surrounding population, over the way the transition to Socialist agriculture is being put into effect and what concrete forms it is taking in each commune, artel and co operative farm, how it is actually being put into practice, how many co operatives and communes are in fact putting it into practice, and how many are only preparing to do so, how many cases have been observed when the communes have given assistance, and what character this assistance bears—philanthropic or Socialist

If out of the aid given them by the state the communes and artels set aside a portion for the peasants, that will only give the peasant grounds for believing that it is merely a case of being helped by kind hearted people, but not by any means proof of a transition to a Socialist system The peasants have for ages been accustomed to regard such "kind hearted people" with suspicion We must know how to keep a check on the way this new social order has manifested itself, by what methods it is being proved to the peasants that co operative, artel cultivation of the soil is better than individual peasant cultivation of the soil, and that it is better *not* because of state aid We must be able to show the peasants the practical realization of this new order even *without* state aid

Unfortunately, I shall not be able to attend your congress to the very end, and I shall therefore be unable to take part in working out these methods of control. But I am certain that with the aid of the comrades in charge of our Commissariat of Agriculture you will succeed in finding these methods. I read with great satisfaction an article by the People's Commissar of Agriculture, Comrade Sereda, in which he stressed the point that the communes and co-operatives must *not* isolate themselves from the surrounding peasant population but must endeavour to improve the latter's husbandry. A commune must be so organized as to serve as a model, and so that the neighbouring peasants should feel attracted to it. We must be able to set them a practical example of how to assist people who are conducting their husbandry under these severe conditions, which are marked by a goods shortage and by general collapse. In order to define the practical methods of effecting this, extremely detailed instructions must be drawn up, which should enumerate all forms of assistance that can be given to the surrounding peasant population, which should ask each commune what it has done to help the peasants, and which should indicate the methods by which each of the existing two thousand communes and nearly four thousand artels may become a nucleus capable of strengthening the conviction in the peasants that collective agriculture, as a transition to Socialism, is a beneficial thing, and not a whimsy or the ravings of a disordered mind.

I have already said that the law demands that the communes should assist the surrounding peasant population. We could not express ourselves otherwise in the law, or give any practical indications. It was our business to establish the general principle, and to count on it that enlightened comrades in the localities would scrupulously apply the law and be able to find a thousand ways of applying it practically in the concrete economic conditions of each given locality. But, of course, every law can be evaded, even under a pretence of observing it. And so the law on assisting the peasants, if it is applied unscrupulously, may become a mere game, and achieve results quite contrary to those intended.

The communes must be developed in such a way that, by contact with them and by the economic help they give, the conditions of peasant husbandry will begin to change, and every commune, artel and co-operative will be able to make the beginnings of an improvement in these conditions and put them into effect, thereby proving to the peasants in practice that this change can only be beneficial for them.

You may naturally think that we shall be told that in order to improve husbandry we need conditions that differ from the present conditions of economic disruption caused by the four years of imperialist war and the two years of civil war forced on us by the imperialists. With such conditions as now exist in our country, how can one think of any widespread improvement of agricultural enterprises? God grant that we carry on somehow and not die of starvation!

If doubts of this kind are expressed, it will be only natural. But if I had to reply to such objections, I would say: Assume that owing to the disorganization of economic life, to economic disruption, goods shortage, poor transport and the destruction of cattle and implements, an extensive improvement of agriculture cannot be effected. But there is no doubt that a certain, not extensive, improvement is possible in a number of individual cases. But let us assume that even this is not the case. Does that mean that the communes cannot produce changes in the life of the surrounding peasants and cannot show that collective agricultural enterprises are not an artificial hothouse growth, but a new form of assistance to the toiling peasantry on the part of the workers' government, and an aid to the former in its struggle against the kulaks? I am convinced that even if the matter is regarded in this way, even if we grant the impossibility of effecting improvements under the present conditions of economic disruption, nevertheless, if there are conscientious Communists in the communes and the artels, a very great deal may be accomplished.

In order that what I am saying may not appear groundless, I would refer to what in our cities has been called subbotniks. This is the name given to work performed gratis by the city workers, over and above what is demanded from every worker, and devoted for the space of several hours to some public need. They were initiated originally in Moscow by the employees of the Moscow-Kazan Railway. One of the appeals of the Soviet government pointed out that the Red Armymen at the front are making unprecedented sacrifices, and that, in spite of all the hardships they are obliged to undergo, they are gaining unprecedented victories over our enemies, and at the same time stated that we can clinch our victories only if such heroism and such self-sacrifice are displayed not only at the front, but also in the rear. The Moscow workers responded to this appeal by organizing subbotniks. There can be no doubt that the workers of Moscow are undergoing greater hardship and want than the peasants, and if you were to acquaint yourselves with their conditions of life and were to ponder over the fact that in spite of these incredibly hard conditions they have begun to carry out subbotniks, you would agree that one cannot by any reference to arduous conditions avoid realizing what can be done under any conditions by applying the same method as was applied by the Moscow workers. Nothing helped so much to enhance the prestige of the Communist Party in the towns, to increase the respect of the non-Party workers for the Communists, as these subbotniks when they ceased to be isolated instances and when the non-Party workers saw in practice that the members of the governing Communist Party are bearing duties, and that the Communists admit new members to the Party not in order that they may enjoy the advantages connected with the position of a governing party, but that they may set an example of real Communist labour, *i.e.*, labour performed gratis. Communism is the highest stage in the development of Socialism, when people work

because they realize the necessity of working for the common good. We know that we cannot establish a Socialist system now—God grant that it may be established in our children's time, or perhaps in our grandchildren's time. But we say that the members of the governing Communist Party bear the greater burden of the difficulties in the fight against capitalism, mobilize the best Communists for the front, and demand of such as cannot be used for this purpose that they perform subbotniks.

Practising these subbotniks, which have become a widespread phenomenon in every large industrial city, participation in which the Party now demands from every one of its members, punishing non-fulfilment even by expulsion from the Party—practising this method in the communes, artels and co-operatives, you may, and must, even under the worst conditions, bring it about that the peasant shall regard every commune, artel and co-operative as an association which is distinguished not by the fact that it receives state subsidies, but by the fact that within it are gathered some of the best representatives of the working class, who not only preach Socialism for others, but are themselves capable of realizing it; who are capable of showing that even under the worst conditions they can conduct their husbandry in a Communist manner and help the surrounding peasant population in every possible way. No reservations are possible on this question, no excuses can be permitted, such as the goods shortage, or absence of seed, or loss of cattle. This will be a test which, in any case, will enable us to say definitely to what extent the difficult task we have taken on ourselves has been mastered in practice.

I am certain that this general meeting of representatives of communes, co-operatives and artels will discuss this and will realize that the application of this method will in fact serve as a powerful instrument for the consolidation of the communes and the co-operatives, and will achieve such practical results that nowhere in Russia will there be a single case of hostility towards the communes, artels and co-operatives on the part of the peasants. But that is not enough. What is required is that the peasants should be sympathetic towards them. For our part, we representatives of the Soviet government will do everything in our power to help to bring this about and to see to it that state assistance from the billion ruble fund, or from other sources, shall be given only in cases when closer relations between the toiling communes or artels and the life of the surrounding peasants have actually been established. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, we consider any assistance given to the artels and the co-operatives not only valueless, but definitely harmful. Assistance given by the communes to the surrounding peasants must not be regarded as assistance which is merely given out of superfluity; this assistance must be Socialist assistance, *i.e.*, it must enable the peasants to replace their isolated, individual farming by co-operative farming. And this can be done only by the subbotnik method of which I have here spoken.

If you learn from the experience of the city workers, who, although living in conditions immeasurably worse than those of the peasants, initiated the movement for subbotniks, I am certain that, with your general and unanimous support, we shall bring it about that each of the several thousand existing communes and artels will become a genuine nursery for Communist ideas and views, a practical example to the peasants showing them that, although it is still a small and feeble growth, it is nevertheless not an artificial, hothouse growth, but a true growth of the new Socialist system. Only then shall we gain a lasting victory over the old ignorance, impoverishment and want, and only then will the difficulties we meet in our future course hold out no terrors for us.

Pravda Nos. 273 and 274,
December 5 and 6, 1919

LETTER TO THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS OF THE UKRAINE IN CONNECTION WITH THE VICTORIES OVER DENIKIN

Comrades, four months ago, in the latter part of August 1919, I had occasion to address a letter to the workers and peasants in connection with the victory over Kolchak.

I am now having this letter reprinted in full for the benefit of the workers and peasants of the Ukraine in connection with the victories over Denikin.

The Red troops have taken Kiev, Poltava and Kharkov and are victoriously advancing on Rostov. The Ukraine is seething with revolt against Denikin. All forces must be rallied in order completely to smash Denikin's army, which is trying to restore the power of the landlords and capitalists. Denikin must be destroyed in order to safeguard ourselves against the least likelihood of a new incursion.

The workers and peasants of the Ukraine should familiarize themselves with the lessons which are to be drawn by all the Russian workers and peasants from the conquest of Siberia by Kolchak and its liberation by the Red troops after many months of landlord and capitalist tyranny.

In the Ukraine Denikin's rule was as severe an ordeal as Kolchak's rule was in Siberia. There can be no doubt that the lessons of this severe ordeal will help the Ukrainian workers and peasants—just as they did the workers and peasants of the Urals and Siberia—to a clearer understanding of the tasks of the Soviet power and induce them to defend it more staunchly.

In Great Russia large landownership has been completely abolished. The same must be done in the Ukraine, and the Soviet power of the Ukrainian workers and peasants must put its seal to the complete abolition of large landownership and to the complete liberation of the Ukrainian workers and peasants from all landlord oppression and from the landlords themselves.

But apart from these tasks, and a number of others which have likewise faced, and are facing, the Great-Russian and the Ukrainian working masses, the Soviet power in the Ukraine has its own special tasks. One of these special tasks deserves at the present moment the utmost

attention It is the national question, or, in other words, the question of whether the Ukraine is to be a separate and independent Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic bound in alliance (federation) with the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, or whether the Ukraine is to amalgamate with Russia to form a single Soviet republic. All Bolsheviks and all enlightened workers and peasants must ponder over this question very carefully

The independence of the Ukraine has been recognized both by the All Russian Central Executive Committee of the R S F S R (Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic) and by the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) It is therefore self evident and generally recognized that only the Ukrainian workers and peasants themselves can decide and will decide at their All Ukrainian Congress of Soviets, whether the Ukraine shall amalgamate with Russia, or whether she shall remain a separate and independent republic, and, in the latter case, what federal tie shall be established between that republic and Russia.

How should this question be decided from the standpoint of the interests of the working people and in order to promote the success of their fight for the complete emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital?

In the first place, the interests of labour demand the fullest confidence and the closest alliance among the working people of the various countries and nations The supporters of the landlords and capitalists, of the bourgeoisie, strive to disunite the workers, to intensify national discord and enmity, in order to weaken the workers and strengthen the power of capital.

Capital is an international force To vanquish it, an international workers' alliance, an international workers' brotherhood, is needed.

We are opposed to national enmity, to national discord, to national exclusiveness We are internationalists We are out for the closest union and the complete amalgamation of the workers and peasants of all nations in a single world Soviet republic

Secondly, the working people must not forget that capitalism has *divided nations into a small number* of oppressing, great power (imperialist), sovereign and privileged nations and an overwhelming majority of oppressed, dependent and semi dependent, non-sovereign nations. The arch criminal and arch reactionary war of 1914-18 still further accentuated this division and as a result aggravated rancour and hatred. For centuries the indignation and distrust of the non sovereign and dependent nations has been accumulating towards the imperialist and oppressing nations, of such nations as the Ukrainian towards such nations as the Great-Russian

We want a *voluntary* alliance of nations—an alliance which would preclude the coercion of one nation by another—an alliance which would be founded on complete confidence, on a clear recognition of brotherly unity, on absolutely voluntary consent Such an alliance cannot be brought

about at once; we have to work towards it with the greatest patience and circumspection, so as not to spoil matters and not to arouse distrust, and in order that the distrust inherited from centuries of landlord and capitalist oppression, private property and the enmity caused by its divisions and redivisions may have a chance to wear off.

Consequently, while unswervingly striving for the unity of nations and ruthlessly suppressing everything that tends to divide them, we must be very cautious, patient and accommodating towards the survivals of national distrust. We must be un-accommodating and uncompromising towards everything that affects the fundamental interests of labour in its fight for emancipation from the yoke of capital. But the question of how to delimit state borders now, for the time being—for we are striving for the complete abolition of state borders—is not a fundamental or important question, but a minor one. It is a question on which we can afford to wait, and must wait, for the national distrust among the broad mass of peasants and small owners is often extremely tenacious, and haste might only intensify it, in other words, jeopardize the cause of complete and ultimate unity.

The experience of the workers' and peasants' revolution in Russia, the revolution of October-November 1917, and of the two years of victorious struggle against the onslaught of the international and Russian capitalists, has shown as clear as can be that the capitalists have succeeded for a time in playing upon the national distrust of the Polish, Latvian, Esthonian and Finnish peasants and small owners for the Great Russians, that they have succeeded for a time in sowing dissension among them and us on the basis of this distrust. Experience has shown that this distrust wears off and disappears only very slowly, and that the more caution and patience the Great Russians, who have for so long been an oppressing nation, display, the surer this distrust passes. It is by recognizing the independence of the Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Esthonian and Finnish states that we are slowly but steadily winning the confidence of the labouring masses of the neighbouring small states, who were most backward and most deceived and downtrodden by the capitalists. It is in this way that we are most surely wresting them from the influence of "their" national capitalists, and most surely inducing them to repose complete trust in the future united international Soviet Republic.

As long as the Ukraine is not completely liberated from Denikin, its government, until the All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets meets, is the All-Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee. Besides the Ukrainian Bolshevik-Communists, there are Ukrainian Borotbist-Communists working on this Revolutionary Committee as members of the government. What chiefly distinguishes the Borotbists from the Bolsheviks is that they insist upon the unconditional independence of the Ukraine. The Bolsheviks will *not* make *this* a subject of difference and disunity, they do not regard *this* as an obstacle to concerted proletarian effort. Let there only

be unity in the struggle against the yoke of capital and for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and there should be no parting of ways among Communists over the question of national frontiers, or whether there should be a federal or some other tie between the states Among the Bolsheviks there are advocates of complete independence for the Ukraine, advocates of a more or less close federal tie, and advocates of the complete amalgamation of the Ukraine with Russia

No parting of ways over these questions is permissible. These questions will be decided by the All Ukrainian Congress of Soviets.

If a Great-Russian Communist were to insist upon the amalgamation of the Ukraine with Russia, Ukrainians might easily suspect him of advocating this policy not from he motive of uniting the proletarians in the fight against capital, but because of the prejudices of the old Great-Russian nationalism, of imperialism Such mistrust is natural, and to a certain degree inevitable and legitimate, because the Great Russians, under the yoke of the landlords and capitalists, have for centuries imbibed the shameful and disgusting prejudices of Great Russian chauvinism

If an Ukrainian Communist insists upon the unconditional state independence of the Ukraine, he lays himself open to the suspicion that he is supporting this policy not from the standpoint of the temporary interests of the Ukrainian workers and peasants in their struggle against the yoke of capital, but on account of the petty bourgeois national prejudices of the small owner For experience has provided hundreds of instances of the petty bourgeois "Socialists" of various countries—all the various Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian pseudo Socialists, Georgian Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries and the like—assuming the disguise of supporters of the proletariat with the sole purpose of deceitfully promoting a policy of compromise with "their" national bourgeoisie against the revolutionary workers We have seen this illustrated in the case of Kerenskyism in Russia in February October 1917, and we have seen it and are seeing it in all other countries

Mutual distrust between the Great Russian and Ukrainian Communists is therefore very easy How is this distrust to be combated? How is it to be overcome and mutual confidence established?

The best way to do this is by working together to uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet power in the fight against the landlords and capitalists of all countries and against their attempts to restore their domination This common fight will clearly show in practice that whatever the decision in regard to state independence or state boundaries may be, the Great Russian and Ukrainian workers imperatively need a close military and economic alliance, for otherwise the capitalists of the "Entente," in other words, the alliance of the richest capitalist countries—England, France, America, Japan and Italy—will crush and strangle us separately Our fight against Kolchak and Denikin,

whom these capitalists supplied with money and arms—is a clear illustration of this danger.

He who undermines the unity and closest alliance between the Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers and peasants is helping the Kolchaks, the Denikins, the capitalists, the marauders of all countries.

Consequently, we Great-Russian Communists must repress with the utmost severity the slightest manifestation in our midst of Great-Russian nationalism, for such manifestations, besides being a betrayal of Communism in general, cause the gravest harm by dividing us from our Ukrainian comrades and thus playing into the hands of Denikin and Denikinism.

Consequently, we Great-Russian Communists must be accommodating in our differences with the Ukrainian Bolshevik Communists and Borotbists when these differences concern the state independence of the Ukraine, the forms of her alliance with Russia, and the national question in general. But all of us, Great-Russian Communists, Ukrainian Communists, and Communists of any other nation must be unyielding and uncompromising in the underlying and fundamental questions of the proletarian struggle, which are the same for all nations, in questions of the proletarian dictatorship, in not tolerating compromise with the bourgeoisie or any division of the forces which are protecting us against Denikin.

Denikin must be vanquished and destroyed, and such incursions as his not allowed to recur. That is to the fundamental interest of both the Great-Russian and the Ukrainian workers and peasants. The fight will be a long and hard one, for the capitalists of the whole world are helping Denikin and will help Denikins of every kind.

In this long and hard fight we Great-Russian and Ukrainian workers must maintain the closest alliance, for separately we shall most definitely be unable to cope with the task. Whatever the boundaries of the Ukraine and Russia may be, whatever may be the forms of their mutual state relationships, that is not so important; that is a matter in which concessions can and should be made, in which one thing, or another, or a third may be tried—the cause of the workers and peasants, of the victory over capitalism, will not perish from that.

But if we fail to maintain the closest alliance one with another, an alliance against Denikin, an alliance against the capitalists and kulaks of our countries and of all countries, the cause of labour will most certainly perish for many years to come in the sense that the capitalists *will be able* to crush and strangle both the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Russia.

And what the bourgeoisie of all countries, and all petty-bourgeois parties, "compromising" parties which tolerate alliance with the bourgeoisie against the workers, tried most of all was to disunite the workers of different nationalities, to fan distrust, and to disrupt a close interna-

tional workers' alliance and international brotherhood. Whenever the bourgeoisie succeeds in this the cause of the workers is lost. The Communists of Russia and the Ukraine must therefore by patient, persistent, stubborn and concerted effort foil the nationalist machinations of the bourgeoisie and vanquish nationalist prejudices of every kind, and set the working people of the world an example of a really solid alliance of the workers and peasants of different countries in the fight for Soviet power, for the overthrow of the yoke of the landlords and capitalists, and for a world Federal Soviet Republic

December 28, 1919

Pravda No. 3,
January 4, 1920

LABOUR DISCIPLINE

Why were we able to vanquish Yudenich, Kolchak and Denikin, although they had the help of the capitalists of the whole world?

Why are we confident we shall now vanquish economic disruption and restore industry and agriculture?

We vanquished the landlords and capitalists because the Red Army-men, the workers and the peasants knew they were fighting in their own cause.

We won because the finest members of the working class and the peasantry displayed unprecedented heroism in this war on the exploiters, performed miracles of bravery, bore untold hardships, sacrificed themselves, and ruthlessly drove out the self-seekers and cowards.

And we are confident that we shall now vanquish economic disruption because the finest members of the working class and the peasantry are rising for the fight with equal conscientiousness, equal firmness and equal heroism.

And when the millions of working people unite as one man and follow the finest members of their class, victory is certain.

The self-seekers have been driven out of the army. Let us all now say:

"Down with the self-seekers, down with those who think of their own advantage, of profiteering and of shirking work, and who fear to make the sacrifices which are essential for victory!"

Long live labour discipline, labour zeal, and devotion to the cause of the workers and peasants!

Eternal glory to those who died in the foremost ranks of the Red Army!

Eternal glory to those who are leading the millions of the working people and are marching with the greatest ardour in the foremost ranks of the army of labour.

Speech delivered early in 1920
First published in *Pravda* No. 18,
January 21, 1928

NINTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

MARCH 29 APRIL 5, 1920

REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, MARCH 29

Comrades, before commencing my report I must say that, like the report at the preceding congress, it is divided into two parts political and organizational This division first of all suggests the inquiry, how the work of the Central Committee has been shaping in its external aspect, the organizational aspect Our Party has now been through its first year without J M Sverdlov,* and his loss was bound to tell on the whole organization of the Central Committee No one could so successfully combine organizational and political work in one person as Comrade Sverdlov, and we were obliged to attempt to replace his work by the work of a body

During the year under review the current daily work of the Central Committee was conducted by the two bodies elected by the Plenum of the Central Committee the Organization Bureau of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the Central Committee In order to achieve co ordination and consistency in the decisions of these two bodies, the Secretary acted as a member of both The practice arrived at was that it became the main and proper function of the Organization Bureau to distribute the forces of the Party, while the function of the Political Bureau was to deal with political questions It goes without saying that this distinction is to a certain extent artificial it is obvious that no policy can be carried out in practice without finding expression in appointments and transfers Consequently, every organizational question assumes a political significance, and the practice was established that the request of a single member of the Central Committee was sufficient to have any question for any reason whatsoever examined as a political

* *J M Sverdlov* (1885 1919)—prominent leader of the Bolshevik Party and one of the first organizers of the Soviet government close associate of Lenin and Stalin After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution was elected Chairman of the All Russian Central Executive Committee —*Ed*

question. To have attempted to divide the functions of the Central Committee in any other way would hardly have been expedient and in practice would hardly have achieved its purpose.

This method of conducting business was productive of extremely good results: no difficulties have arisen between the two bureaus on any occasion. The work of these bodies has on the whole proceeded harmoniously, and practical fulfilment was facilitated by the presence of the Secretary. Furthermore, whatever the Secretary of the Party did was solely and exclusively in pursuance of the will of the Central Committee. It must be emphasized from the very outset, so as to remove all misunderstanding, that only the corporate decisions of the Central Committee adopted in the Organization Bureau or the Political Bureau, or in the Plenum of the Central Committee—exclusively such matters were carried out by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. The Central Committee cannot function properly otherwise.

After these brief remarks on the arrangement of work within the Central Committee, I shall proceed to my task, namely, the report of the Central Committee. To present a report on the political work of the Central Committee is a highly difficult task if understood in the literal sense of the term. A vast amount of the work of the Political Bureau during this year consisted in the current decision of all sorts of questions that arose affecting policy, questions of co-ordinating the activities of all the Soviet and Party institutions, all the organizations of the working class, of co-ordinating and directing the work of the entire Soviet Republic. The Political Bureau decided all questions of foreign and domestic policy. Naturally, to attempt to enumerate these questions, even approximately, would be impossible. You will find material for a general summary in the printed matter prepared by the Central Committee for this Congress. To attempt to repeat this summary in my report would be beyond my powers, and I think would not be interesting to the delegates. Every one of us who works in any Party or Soviet organization daily follows the extraordinary succession of political questions, both foreign and domestic. The way these questions were decided, as expressed in the decrees of the Soviet government, in the activities of the Party organizations, at every turn, is in itself an evaluation of the Central Committee of the Party. It must be said that the questions were so numerous that they frequently had to be decided under conditions of extreme haste, and it was only because the members of the body knew each other so thoroughly, knew every shade of opinion—it was only because of the confidence they had in each other, that this work could be performed at all. Otherwise it would have been beyond the powers of a body even three times the size. When deciding complex questions it frequently happened that meetings had to be replaced by telephone conversations. This was done in the full assurance that obviously complicated and disputed questions would not be overlooked. Now, when I am called upon to make a general report, instead of giving a chro-

nological review and a grouping of subjects, I shall take the liberty of dwelling on the main and most essential points, such, moreover, as link up the experience of yesterday, or, more correctly, of the past year, with the tasks that now confront us

The time is not yet ripe for a history of the Soviet regime And even if it were, I must say for myself—and I think for the Central Committee as well—that we have no intention of becoming historians What interests us is the present and the future We take the past year under review as material, as a lesson, as a stepping stone, from which we must proceed further Regarded from this point of view, the work of the Central Committee falls into two big categories work connected with military problems and problems determining the international situation of the Republic, and the work of internal, peaceful economic construction, which only began to come to the fore at the end of the last year perhaps, or the beginning of this year, when it became quite clear that we had won a decisive victory on the decisive fronts of the civil war Last spring our military situation was an extremely difficult one as you remember, we were still to experience quite a number of defeats, of new huge and unexpected offensives on the part of the representatives of counter revolution and the representatives of the Entente, none of which could have been anticipated by us It was therefore only natural that the greater part of this period was devoted to the military problem, the problem of the civil war, which seemed unsolvable to all the faint hearts, not to speak of the parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries and other representatives of the petty bourgeois democracy, to all the intermediate elements, and which induced them to declare quite sincerely that this problem could not be solved, that Russia was backward and enfeebled and could not vanquish the capitalist system of the entire world, seeing that the revolution in the West had been delayed And we therefore had to maintain our position and to declare with absolute firmness and conviction that we would succeed, we had to issue the slogans "Everything for victory!" and "Everything for the war!" For the sake of these slogans it was necessary quite consciously and frankly to forego the satisfaction of a number of most essential needs, and time and again to deny assistance to many, in the conviction that all forces had to be concentrated on the war, and that we had to win the war which the Entente was forcing upon us It was only because of the Party s vigilance and its strict discipline, because the authority of the Party united all government departments and institutions, because the slogans issued by the Central Committee were followed by tens, hundreds, thousands and finally millions of people as one man, because incredible sacrifices were made, that the miracle could take place which actually did take place It was only because of all th s that we were able to win in spite of the twice, thrice and even four times repeated campaigns of the imperialists of the Entente and of the whole world And, of course, we not only stress this aspect of the matter, we

must also bear in mind that it is a lesson that without discipline and centralization we would never have accomplished this task. Our bearing such incredible sacrifices in order to save the country from counter-revolution and in order that the Russian Revolution might triumph over Denikin, Yudenich and Kolchak are a guarantee of the world social revolution. To achieve this, we had to have Party discipline, the strictest centralization and the absolute certainty that the untold sacrifices borne by tens and hundreds of thousands of people would help us to accomplish all these tasks, and that it really could be done and assured. And for this purpose it was essential that our Party and the class which is exercising the dictatorship, the working class, should serve as elements uniting millions upon millions of working people in Russia and all over the world.

If we reflect what, after all, was the underlying reason for this historical miracle, namely, that a weak, exhausted and backward country should have defeated the most powerful countries in the world, we shall find that it was centralization, discipline, and unparalleled self-sacrifice. On what basis? Millions of working people in a country that was anything but cultured could achieve organization, discipline and centralization only because the workers, having passed through the school of capitalism, had been united by capitalism, because the proletariat in all the advanced countries were united—and united the more, the more advanced the country; and on the other hand, because property, capitalist property, small property under commodity production, disunites the workers. Property disunites, whereas we are uniting, and increasingly uniting millions of working people all over the world. This is now clear even to the blind, one might say, or at least to those who would not see. Our enemies grew more and more disunited as time went on. They were disunited by capitalist property, by private property under commodity production, whether they were small men who profiteered from the sale of surplus grain and enriched themselves at the expense of the starving workers, or whether they were the capitalists of the various countries, even though they possessed military might and were creating a "League of Nations," a great "united league" of all the foremost nations of the world. Unity of this kind is a sheer fiction, a sheer fraud, a sheer lie. And we have seen—and this was a great example—that this notorious "League of Nations," which attempted to hand out mandates for the government of states, to divide up the world—that this notorious alliance proved to be a soap bubble which at once burst, because it was an alliance founded on capitalist property. We have seen this on a vast historical scale, and it confirms the fundamental truth on whose recognition we based the righteousness of our cause, our absolute certainty of the success of the October Revolution, our certainty that the cause we were embarking on was one to which, despite all difficulties and obstacles, millions and millions of working people in all countries would rally.

We knew that we had allies, that it was only necessary to display a spirit of self sacrifice in the one country on which history had laid this honourable and difficult task, and these *incredible sacrifices would* be repaid a hundredfold—for every month we held on in our country would win us millions and millions of allies in all countries of the world

If, after all, we reflect why it was that we were able to succeed, that we were bound to succeed, we shall find that the reason was that our enemies—who were formally tied by all sorts of bonds to the most powerful governments and representatives of capital in the world—however united they may have been formally, actually turned out to be disunited Their internal bond in fact disunited them, pitted them against each other Capitalist property disintegrated them, transformed them from allies into savage beasts, so that they failed to see that Soviet Russia was increasing the number of her followers among the British soldiers landed in Archangel, among the French sailors landed in Sevastopol, among the workers of all countries, of all the advanced countries without exception, where the social compromisers took the part of capital And, in the long run, it was this fundamental cause, this underlying cause, that secured us certain victory It is this cause that continues to be the chief, insuperable and inexhaustible source of our strength, and it permits us to affirm that when we in our country achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat in full measure, and the maximum unity of its forces through its vanguard, its advanced party, we may expect the world revolution And this in fact is an expression of will, an expression of the proletarian determination to fight, it is an expression of the proletarian determination *to achieve an alliance of millions upon millions of workers of all countries.* The bourgeoisie and the pseudo Socialist gentry of the Second International have declared this to be mere propagandist talk No, it is a historical reality, borne out by the bloody and painful experience of the civil war in Russia For this civil war was a war against world capital, and world capital disintegrated of itself amidst strife, devoured itself, whereas *we, in a country where the proletariat was perishing from hunger and* typhus, emerged more hardened and stronger than ever In this country we won the support of increasing numbers of working people What formerly seemed to the compromisers to be propagandist talk, what the bourgeoisie was accustomed to sneer at, has been transformed in these years of our revolution, and particularly in the year under review, into an absolute and indisputable historical fact, which enables us to say with positive assurance that our having accomplished this confirms that we possess a world wide basis, immeasurably wider than was the case in any previous revolution We have an international alliance, an alliance which has nowhere been registered, which has never been given formal embodiment, which from the point of view of 'public law" means nothing, but which, in the disintegrating capitalist world, actually means everything Every month that we gained positions, or merely held on

against an incredibly powerful enemy, proved to the world that we were right and brought us millions of new supporters.

This process was a difficult one; it was accompanied by tremendous defeats. In this very year under review the monstrous White terror in Finland was followed by the defeat of the Hungarian revolution, which, under a secret treaty with Rumania, the representatives of the Entente stifled, having deceived their parliaments.

It was the vilest piece of treachery, this conspiracy of the international Entente to crush the Hungarian revolution by means of a White terror, not to mention the fact that in order to strangle the German revolution they were ready for any understanding with the German compromisers, and that these people, who had declared Liebknecht to be an honest German, joined the German imperialists in flinging themselves on this honest German like mad dogs. They exceeded all conceivable bounds; but every such act of suppression on their part only strengthened and consolidated us, while it undermined them.

And it seems to me that we must draw the lesson particularly from this fundamental experience. Here we must give especial thought to basing our agitation and propaganda on an analysis, an explanation of why we were victorious, why the sacrifices of the civil war were repaid a hundredfold, and how we are to use this experience in order to succeed in another war, a war on a bloodless front, a war which has only changed its form, but which is being waged against us by those same representatives, servitors and leaders of the old capitalist world, only still more vigorously, still more furiously and viciously. More than any other, our revolution has borne out the rule that the strength of a revolution, the vigour of its assault, its energy, determination, its victory and its triumph intensify the resistance of the bourgeoisie. The more victorious we are, the more the capitalist exploiters learn to unite and the more determined is their assault. For, as you all distinctly remember—it was not so long ago judged by the passage of time, but a long time ago judged by the march of events—at the beginning of the October Revolution Bolshevism was regarded as a freak; and just as in Russia this view, which was a reflection of the feeble development and weakness of the proletarian revolution, had very soon to be abandoned, it has now been abandoned in Europe as well. Bolshevism has become a world-wide phenomenon: the workers' revolution has raised its head. The Soviet system, in creating which in October we followed the traditions of 1905, developing our own experience, has become a world-wide and historical phenomenon.

Two camps are now quite consciously facing each other all over the world; this may be said without the slightest exaggeration. It should be noted that only this year have they become locked in a decisive and final struggle. And now, at the time of this very congress, we are passing through what is perhaps one of the greatest, profoundest—still incomplete—periods of transition from war to peace. You all know what hap-

sphere of activities of the Red Army, on the bloody front. But the conclusion of peace with us does not depend on the small states even if they desire it. They are up to their ears in debt to the countries of the Entente, who are wrangling and competing desperately among themselves. We must therefore remember that peace is of course possible from the point of view of the world situation, the historical situation created by the civil war and by the war against the Entente. But the measures we take for peace must be accompanied by most intense military preparations, and in no case must our army be disarmed. Our army offers a real guarantee that the imperialist powers will not make the slightest attempt or encroachment on us, for although they might count on certain ephemeral successes at first, not one of them would escape defeat at the hands of Soviet Russia. That we must realize, that must be made the basis of our agitation and propaganda, that is what we must prepare for, in order to solve the problem which, in view of our growing exhaustion, compels us to combine the one with the other.

I now pass to those important considerations of principle which induced us to direct the working masses so resolutely along the lines of using the army for the solution of certain basic and urgent problems. The old source of discipline, capital, has grown feeble, the old source of unity has disappeared. We must create a different kind of discipline, a different source of discipline and unity. Compulsion evokes the indignation, the howls, the yells and outcries of the bourgeois democrats, who make great play of the words "freedom" and "equality," but do not understand that freedom for capital is a crime against the working people. In our fight against falsehood, we introduced labour service and proceeded to unite the working people, without in the least shrinking from compulsion. For no revolution has ever been effected without compulsion, and the proletariat has a right to exercise compulsion in order to hold its own at all costs. When those gentry, the bourgeois, the compromisers, the German Independents, the Austrian Independents and the French Longuetites, argued about the historical factor, they always forgot such a factor as the revolutionary determination, firmness and steadfastness of the proletariat. At this moment of disintegration of the capitalist countries and of the capitalist class, at this moment of its crisis and despair, this political factor is the only one that counts. Talk about minority and majority, about democracy and freedom, decides nothing, however much the heroes of a past historical period may invoke them. It is the class consciousness and firmness of the working class that count here. If the working class is prepared to make sacrifices, if it has shown that it is able to strain every nerve, the problem will be solved. Everything must be directed to the solution of this problem. The determination of the working class, its inflexible adherence to the watchword "Death rather than surrender!"—this is not only a historical factor, it is the decisive, the winning factor. We are now proceeding from this

victory and this conviction to problems of peaceful economic development, the solution of which is the chief function of our Congress. In this respect we cannot, in my opinion, speak of a report of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, or, rather, of a political report of the Central Committee. We must say frankly and bluntly that this, comrades, is a question which you must decide, which you must weigh with all your authority as the supreme Party body. We have laid the question before you quite clearly. We have taken up a definite stand. It is your duty finally to endorse, correct or amend our decision. But in its report the Central Committee must say that on this fundamental and urgent question it has taken up an absolutely definite stand. Yes, the thing now is to apply to the peaceful work of economic development, to the restoration of our shattered industry, everything that can weld the proletariat into an absolute unity. Here we need the iron discipline, the iron system, without which we could not have held on for two months, let alone over two years. We must utilize our success. On the other hand, it must be realized that this transition will demand many sacrifices, of which the country has borne a lot as it is.

On the principle of the thing the Central Committee was quite clear. Our activities were entirely governed by this policy and conducted in this spirit. Take, for example, the question of corporate management versus individual management, which you will have to settle—a question which may appear to be a subsidiary one, and which in itself, if torn from its context, cannot of course claim to be a fundamental question of principle. This question should be examined only from the point of view of the basic knowledge, experience and revolutionary practice that we have acquired. For instance, we are told that "corporate management is one of the forms in which the masses participate in the work of administration." But we on the Central Committee discussed this question and took our decision, which we have to report to you. Comrades, such theoretical confusion cannot be tolerated. Had we permitted a tenth part of this theoretical confusion in the fundamental question of our military activities, of our civil war, we would have been beaten, and would have deserved to be beaten. Permit me, comrades, in connection with the report of the Central Committee and with this question of whether the new class should participate in the work of administration on a corporate or an individual basis, to introduce a little bit of theory, to point out how a class governs and in what the domination of a class consists. After all, we are not novices in these matters, and what distinguishes our revolution from former revolutions is that it contains no utopianism. The new class, having replaced the old class, can maintain itself only by a desperate struggle against other classes; and it will finally triumph only if it can bring about the abolition of classes in general. That is what the vast and complex process of the class struggle demands; otherwise you will sink into a morass of confusion. In what does the domination of a class consist? In what did the domination of the bourgeoisie over the

feudal lords consist? The constitution spoke of freedom and equality. That was a lie As long as there are workingmen, property owners are in a position to profiteer, and indeed, as property-owners, are compelled to profiteer. We declare that there is no equality, that the well fed man is not the equal of the hungry man, that the profiteer is not the equal of the workingman

In what does the domination of the class consist now? The domination of the proletariat consists in the fact that the landlords and capitalists have been deprived of their property The spirit and basic idea of all previous constitutions, even the most republican and democratic, amounted to one thing—property Our constitution has the right, has won itself the right, to a place in history by virtue of the fact that the abolition of property is not confined to a paper declaration The victorious proletariat has abolished property, has completely annulled it—and therein lies its domination as a class The prime thing is the question of property. As soon as the question of property was settled practically, the domination of the class was assured When, after that, the constitution recorded on paper what had been brought about in fact, namely, the abolition of capitalist and landlord property, and added that under the constitution the working class enjoys more rights than the peasantry, while exploiters have no rights whatever—that was a record of the fact that we had established the domination of our class, thereby binding to ourselves all strata and all small groups of working people The petty-bourgeois property owners are disunited, those who have more property are the enemies of those who have less property, and the proletarians, by abolishing property, have declared open war on them There are still many unenlightened and ignorant people who are wholly in favour of any kind of freedom of trade, but who, when they see the discipline and self-sacrifice displayed in securing victory over the exploiters, cannot fight, they are not with us, but are powerless to oppose us It is only the domination of a class that determines property relations and which class is to be on top Those who, as we so frequently observe, associate the question of what the domination of a class consists in with the question of "democratic centralism" create such confusion that all successful work becomes impossible Clarity in propaganda and agitation is essential When our enemies said and admitted that we had performed miracles in developing agitation and propaganda, that was not to be understood in the superficial sense that we had large numbers of agitators and used up large quantities of paper, but in the intrinsic sense that the truth contained in that propaganda penetrated to the minds of all. That is a truth which cannot be escaped

Whenever classes replaced other classes, they altered property relations When the bourgeoisie superseded the feudals it altered property relations the constitution of the bourgeoisie says that the man of property is not the equal of the beggar. That was bourgeois freedom. This kind

of equality ensured the rule of the capitalist class in the state. But do you think that when the bourgeoisie superseded the feudals it confused the state with the administration? No, they were no such fools. They declared that the work of administration required people who knew how to administer, and that they would adapt feudal administrators for that purpose. And that is what they did. Was it a mistake? No, comrades, the art of administration does not descend from heaven, it is not inspired by the Holy Ghost. And the fact that a class is the leading class does not make it at once capable of administering. We have an example of this: while the bourgeoisie was establishing its victory it took for the work of administration members of another class, the feudal class; there was nowhere else to get them from. We must be sober and face the facts. The bourgeoisie had recourse to the old class; and we, too, are now confronted with the task of taking the knowledge and training of the old class, subordinating it to our needs, and using it all for the success of our class. We, therefore, say that the victorious class must be mature, and maturity is attested not by a document or certificate, but by experience and practice. When the bourgeoisie triumphed, it did not know how to administer; and it made sure of its victory by proclaiming a new constitution and by recruiting, enlisting, administrators from its own class and training them, utilizing for this purpose administrators of the old class. It began to train its own new administrators fitting them for the work with the help of the whole machinery of state; it sequestrated the feudal institutions and admitted only the wealthy to the schools; and in this way, in the course of many years and decades, it trained administrators from its own class. Today, in a state which is constructed on the pattern and in the image of the dominant class, we must act as every state has acted. If we do not want to be guilty of sheer utopianism and meaningless phrasemongering, we must say that we must learn from the experience of the past; that we must safeguard the constitution won by the revolution, but that for the work of administration, of organizing the state, we need people who are versed in the art of administration, who have state and business experience, and that there is nowhere we can turn to for such people except the old class.

Opinions on corporate management are all too frequently imbued with a spirit of sheer ignorance, an anti-expert spirit. We shall never succeed with such a spirit. In order to succeed we must understand the history of the old bourgeois world in all its profundity; and in order to build Communism we must take technology and science and make them available to wider circles. And we can take them only from the bourgeoisie—there is nowhere else. Prominence must be given to this fundamental question, it must be treated as one of the basic problems of economic development. We have to administer with the help of people belonging to the class we have overthrown; they are imbued with the prejudices of their class and we must re-educate them. At the same time we must recruit our own administrators from our own class. We must use the en-

tire machinery of state to put the schools, extra-school education, practical training at the service of the proletarians, the workers and the labouring peasants, under the guidance of the Communists.

That is the only way to get things going. After our two years' experience we cannot argue as though we were only just setting about the work of Socialist construction. We committed enough follies in and around the Smolny period.* That is nothing to be ashamed of. How were we to know, seeing that we were undertaking something absolutely new? We first tried one way, then another. We swam with the current, because it was impossible to distinguish what was right from what was wrong; that requires time. Now that is all a matter of the recent past, which we have got beyond. That past in which chaos and enthusiasm prevailed is now over. One document from that past is the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. It is a historic document—more, it was a historic period. The Peace of Brest-Litovsk was forced upon us because we were helpless in every way. What sort of period was it? It was a period of impotence, from which we emerged victorious. It was a period in which corporate management was universal. You cannot escape that historical fact by declaring that corporate management is a school of administration. . . . You cannot stay forever in the preparatory class of a school! That will not do. We are grown up now, and we shall be beaten and beaten again in every field if we behave like schoolboys. We must push forward. We must push higher with energy and unanimity of will. Tremendous difficulties face the trade unions. We must get them to see this task as a fight against the survivals of this famous democracy. All these outcries against appointees, all this old and dangerous rubbish which finds its way into resolutions and conversations must be swept away. Otherwise we cannot succeed. If we have failed to master this lesson in these two years, we are lagging, and those who lag get beaten.

The task is an extremely difficult one. Our trade unions have been of tremendous assistance in the building of the proletarian state. They were a link between the Party and the unenlightened millions. Do not let us fool ourselves: the trade unions bore the whole brunt of the struggle when the state needed help on food work. Was this not a tremendous task? The recent issue of the *Bulletin of the Central Statistical Board* contains summaries by statisticians who certainly cannot be suspected of Bolshevism. Two interesting figures are given: in 1918 and 1919 the workers in the consuming provinces received seven poods a year, while the peasants in the producing provinces consumed seventeen poods a year. Before the war they used to consume sixteen poods a year. There you have two figures illustrating the relation of classes in the struggle for food. The proletariat continued to make sacrifices. People shout about coercion! But the

* *The Smolny period*—the initial period when the office of the Soviet government was housed in the Smolny Institute in Petrograd prior to the removal of the seat of government to Moscow in March 1918.—*Ed.*

proletariat justified and legitimatized coercion; it justified it by making the greatest sacrifices. The majority of the population, the peasants of the producing provinces of our starving and impoverished Russia, for the first time have more food than throughout the centuries of tsarist and capitalist Russia. And we say that the masses will go on starving until the Red Army is victorious. The vanguard of the working class had to make this sacrifice. This struggle is a school; but when we leave this school we must go forward. This step must now be taken at all costs. Like all trade unions, the old trade unions have a history and a past. In the past they were organs of resistance to those who oppressed labour, to capitalism. But now that the class has become the ruling class, and is being called upon to make great sacrifices, to starve and to perish, the situation has changed.

Not everybody understands this change, not everybody grasps its significance. And the responsibility for this partly lies with certain Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who are demanding that corporate management be substituted for individual management. No, comrades, that won't work. We have got beyond that. We are now faced with a very difficult task: having succeeded on the bloody front, we must now succeed on the bloodless front. That war is a more difficult one. That front is the most arduous. We say this frankly to all class-conscious workers. The war which we sustained at the front must be followed by a bloodless war. The fact is that the more we were victorious, the more regions we secured like Siberia, the Ukraine and the Kuban. In those regions there are rich peasants; there are no proletarians, and what proletariat there is has been corrupted by petty-bourgeois habits. We know that everybody who has a piece of land in those parts says: "A fig for the government, I'll get all I can out of the starving. What do I care for the government." The peasant profiteer who when left to the tender mercies of Denikin swung towards us will now be aided by the Entente. The war has changed its front and its forms. It is now taking the form of trade, of bag-trading, which it has made international. In Kamenev's theses published in the *Izvestia of the Central Committee* the principles on which this is based are stated fully. They want to make bag-trading international. They want to turn peaceful economic development into the peaceful disintegration of the Soviet power. No you don't, Messieurs the imperialists! We are on our guard. We declare: we have fought, and we shall therefore retain as our basic slogan the one which helped us to victory; we shall fully preserve that slogan and apply it to the field of labour. That slogan is the firmness and unity of will of the proletariat. The old prejudices, the old habits that still remain must be discarded. . . .

I should like, in conclusion, to dwell on Comrade Gussev's pamphlet, which in my opinion deserves attention for two reasons. It is a good pamphlet not only from the formal standpoint, not only because it has been written for our Congress. Somehow, we have all been so far accustomed

to writing resolutions. They say that all literature is good except tedious literature. Resolutions, I take it, should be classed as tedious literature. It would be better if we followed Comrade Gussev's example and wrote fewer resolutions and more pamphlets, even though they bristled with errors as his does. The pamphlet is a good one in spite of these errors, because it centres attention on a fundamental economic plan for the restoration of industry and production throughout the country, and because it subordinates everything to this fundamental economic plan. The Central Committee has introduced into its theses, which were distributed today, a whole paragraph taken entirely from Comrade Gussev's theses. This fundamental economic plan can be worked out in greater detail with the help of experts. We must remember that the plan is designed for many years to come. We do not promise to deliver the country from its hunger stricken condition all at once. We say that the struggle will be much harder than the one on the military front. But it is a struggle that interests us more, it brings us nearer to our real and main tasks. It demands the maximum exertion of effort and that unity of will which we have displayed before and must display now. If we accomplish this, we shall gain no less a victory on the bloodless front than on the front of civil war.

Published in
The Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Verbatim Report, 1920

FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ANCIENT SOCIAL SYSTEM TO THE CREATION OF THE NEW

Our newspaper is devoted to the question of Communist labour.

This is a highly important question in the building of Socialism. First of all, we must be very clear on the point that this question could be raised in a practical way only after the proletariat had captured political power, only after the landlords and capitalists had been expropriated, only after the proletariat, having captured political power, had achieved decisive victories over the exploiters, who had organized desperate resistance, counter-revolutionary rebellions and civil war.

In the beginning of 1918, it seemed that that time had arrived—and it had indeed arrived after the February (1918) military campaign of German imperialism against Russia. But that period was so short-lived, the new and more powerful wave of counter-revolutionary rebellions and invasions swept over us so quickly, that the Soviet government had no opportunity to devote itself at all closely and persistently to problems of peaceful construction.

Now we have passed through two years of unprecedented and incredible difficulties, of famine, privation, and suffering, simultaneously with unprecedented victories of the Red Army over the hordes of the international capitalist reaction.

Now there are serious grounds for hoping (if the French capitalists do not drive Poland into war with us) that we shall get a more durable and lasting peace.

During these two years we obtained some experience in construction on the basis of Socialism. That is why we can, and should, come right down to the problem of Communist labour, or rather, it would be more correct to say, not Communist, but Socialist labour; for we are dealing not with the higher, but the lower, the primary stage of development of the new social system that is growing out of capitalism.

Communist labour in the narrower and stricter sense of the term is labour performed gratis for the benefit of society, labour performed, not as a definite duty, not for the purpose of obtaining a right to certain products, not according to previously established and legally fixed rates but voluntary labour, irrespective of rates, labour performed without expectation of reward, without the condition of reward, labour performed

out of a habit of working for the common good, and out of a conscious realization (become a habit) of the necessity of working for the common good—labour as the requirement of a healthy body.

It must be clear to everybody that we, i.e., our society, our social system, are still a very long way from the application of this form of labour on a broad, really mass scale.

But the very fact that this question has been raised, and raised both by the whole of the advanced proletariat (the Communist Party and the trade unions) and by the state, is a step in this direction.

To achieve big things we must start with little ones.

On the other hand, after the "big things," after the revolution which overthrew capitalist ownership and placed the proletariat in power, the construction of economic life on *the new basis can* only start *from little things*.

Subbotniks, labour armies, labour service—there we have the practical realization of Socialist and Communist labour in various forms.

It still suffers from numerous defects. Only people who are totally incapable of thinking, if we leave aside the champions of capitalism, can laugh (or rage) at them.

Defects, mistakes, blunders in such a new, difficult and great undertaking are inevitable. Those who are afraid of the difficulties of building Socialism, those who allow themselves to be scared by them, those who give way to despair or cowardly dismay, are no Socialists.

The work of creating a new labour discipline, of creating social ties of a new form among men, of creating new forms and methods of stimulating people at work, must take many years and decades.

It is a work of the most thankful and the noblest kind.

It is our good fortune that, by overthrowing the bourgeoisie and suppressing its resistance, we have been able to win the ground on which this work has *become possible*.

And we will set about this work with all our might. Perseverance, persistence, willingness, determination and ability to test a thing a hundred times, to alter it a hundred times, but to achieve the goal come what may—these are qualities which the proletariat acquired in the course of the ten, fifteen or twenty years that preceded the October Revolution, and in the course of the two years that have passed since this revolution, while suffering unprecedented privation, hunger, ruin and destitution. These qualities of the proletariat are a guarantee that the proletariat will conquer.

April 8, 1920

Kommunistichesky Subbotnik
April 11, 1920

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM, AN INFANTILE DISORDER

I

IN WHAT SENSE CAN WE SPEAK OF THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION?

During the first months after the conquest of political power by the proletariat in Russia (October 25 [November 7], 1917), it might have appeared that the tremendous difference between backward Russia and the advanced countries of Western Europe would cause the proletarian revolution in these latter countries to have very little resemblance to ours. Now we already have very considerable international experience which quite definitely shows that some of the fundamental features of our revolution have a significance which is not local, not peculiarly national, not Russian only, but international. I speak here of international significance not in the broad sense of the term: not some, but all the fundamental and many of the secondary features of our revolution are of international significance in regard to the influence it has upon all countries. No, taking it in the narrowest sense, *i.e.*, understanding international significance to mean the international validity or the historical inevitability of a repetition on an international scale of what has taken place here, it must be admitted that some of the fundamental features of our revolution do possess such a significance.

Of course, it would be a great mistake to exaggerate this truth and to apply it to more than a few of the fundamental features of our revolution. It would also be a mistake to lose sight of the fact that after the victory of the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries things in all probability will take a sharp turn, *viz.*, Russia will soon after cease to be the model country and once again become a backward country (in the "Soviet" and the Socialist sense).

But at the present moment of history the situation is precisely such that the Russian model reveals to *all* countries something, and something very essential, of their near and inevitable future. The advanced workers in every land have long understood this; most often they have

not so much understood it as grasped it, sensed it, by revolutionary class instinct.

Herein lies the international "significance" (in the narrow sense of the term) of the Soviet power, and of the fundamentals of Bolshevik theory and tactics. This the "revolutionary" leaders of the Second International, such as Kautsky in Germany and Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler in Austria, failed to understand, and because of this they proved to be reactionaries and advocates of the worst kind of opportunism and social treachery. Incidentally, the anonymous pamphlet entitled *The World Revolution* (*Weltrevolution*)* which appeared in 1919 in Vienna (*Sozialistische Bücherei*, Heft 11; Ignaz Brand) very clearly reveals their whole process of thought and their whole circle of ideas, or, rather, the full depth of their stupidity, pedantry, baseness and betrayal of working class interests—and all this under the guise of "defending" the idea of "world revolution."

But we shall have to discuss this pamphlet in greater detail some other time. Here we shall note only one more point: long, long ago, Kautsky, when he was still a Marxist and not a renegade, approaching the question as a historian, foresaw the possibility of a situation arising in which the revolutionary spirit of the Russian proletariat would serve as a model for Western Europe. This was in 1902, when Kautsky wrote an article entitled "The Slavs and Revolution" for the revolutionary *Iskra*. In this article he wrote as follows:

> "At the present time [in contrast to 1848] it would seem that not only have the Slavs entered the ranks of the revolutionary nations, but that the centre of revolutionary thought and revolutionary action is shifting more and more to the Slavs. The revolutionary centre is shifting from the West to the East. In the first half of the nineteenth century it was located in France, at times in England. In 1848 Germany too joined the ranks of the revolutionary nations. . . . The new century opens with events which induce us to think that we are approaching a further shift of the revolutionary centre, namely, to Russia. . . . Russia, which has borrowed so much revolutionary initiative from the West, is now perhaps herself ready to serve as a source of revolutionary energy for the West. The Russian revolutionary movement that is now flaring up will perhaps prove to be a most potent means of exorcizing that spirit of flabby philistinism and temperate politics which is beginning to spread in our midst, and it may cause the thirst for battle and the passionate devotion to our great ideals to flare up in bright flames again. Russia has long ceased to be merely a bulwark of reaction and absolutism in Western Europe. It might be said that today the very opposite is the case. Western Europe is becoming a bul-

* The author of the pamphlet was Otto Bauer.—*Ed.*

wark of reaction and absolutism in Russia. . . . The Russian revolutionaries might perhaps have settled with the tsar long ago had they not been compelled at the same time to fight his ally, European capital. Let us hope that this time they will succeed in settling with both enemies, and that the new 'Holy Alliance' will collapse more quickly than its predecessors. But however the present struggle in Russia may end, the blood and felicity of the martyrs, whom, unfortunately, she is producing in too great numbers, will not have been sacrificed in vain. They will nourish the shoots of social revolution throughout the civilized world and cause them to grow more luxuriantly and rapidly. In 1848 the Slavs were a black frost which blighted the flowers of the people's spring. Perhaps they are now *destined to be the storm that will break the* ice of reaction and will irresistibly bring a new and happy spring for the nations." (Karl Kautsky, "The Slavs and Revolution," *Iskra*, Russian Social-Democratic revolutionary newspaper, No. 18, March 10, 1902.)

How well Karl Kautsky wrote eighteen years ago!

II

ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL CONDITIONS FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE BOLSHEVIKS

Certainly, almost everyone now realizes that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years, unless the strictest, truly iron discipline had prevailed in our Party, and unless the latter had been rendered the fullest and unreserved support of the whole mass of the working class, that is, of all its thinking, honest, self-sacrificing and influential elements who are capable of leading or of carrying with them the backward strata.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful* enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by its overthrow (even if only in one country), and whose power lies not only in the strength of international capital, in the strength and durability of the international connections of the bourgeoisie, but also in the *force of habit*, in the strength of *small production*. For, unfortunately, small production is still very, very widespread in the world, and small production *engenders* capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. For all these reasons the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a long, stubborn and desperate war of life and death, a war demanding perseverance, discipline, firmness, indomitableness and unity of will.

I repeat, the experience of the victorious dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia has clearly shown even to those who are unable to think, or who have not had occasion to ponder over this question, that absolute centralization and the strictest discipline of the proletariat constitute one of the fundamental conditions for victory over the bourgeoisie.

This is often discussed But not nearly enough thought is given to what it means, and to the conditions that make it possible Would it not be better if greetings to the Soviet government and the Bolsheviks were *more frequently* accompanied by a *profound analysis* of the reasons *why* the Bolsheviks were able to build up the discipline the revolutionary proletariat needs?

As a trend of political thought and as a political party, Bolshevism exists since 1903 Only the history of Bolshevism during the *whole* period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and to maintain under most difficult conditions the iron discipline that is needed for the victory of the proletariat.

And first of all the question arises how is the discipline of the revolutionary party of the proletariat maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its perseverance, self-sacrifice and heroism Secondly, by its ability to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain extent if you like, to merge with the broadest masses of the toilers—primarily with the proletariat, *but also with the non-proletarian* toiling masses Thirdly, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided that the broadest masses have been convinced *by their own experience* that they are correct Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party that is really capable of being a party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved Without these conditions, all attempts to establish discipline inevitably fall flat and end in phrasemongering and grimacing On the other hand, these conditions cannot arise all at once They are created only by prolonged effort and hard won experience Their creation is facilitated by correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement

That Bolshevism was able, in 1917 20, under unprecedentedly difficult conditions, to build up and successfully maintain the strictest centralization and iron discipline was simply due to a number of historical peculiarities of Russia

On the one hand, Bolshevism arose in 1903 in the very firm foundation of the theory of Marxism And the correctness of this—and only this—revolutionary theory has been proved not only by the experience of all countries throughout the nineteenth century, but particularly by the

experience of the wanderings and vacillations, the mistakes and disappointments of revolutionary thought in Russia. For nearly half a century—approximately from the 'forties to the 'nineties—advanced thinkers in Russia, under the oppression of an unparalleled, savage and reactionary tsardom, eagerly sought for the correct revolutionary theory and followed each and every "last word" in Europe and America in this sphere with astonishing diligence and thoroughness. Russia achieved Marxism, the only correct revolutionary theory, veritably through *suffering*, by half a century of unprecedented torment and sacrifice, of unprecedented revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, testing in practice, disappointment, verification and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the enforced emigration caused by tsardom, revolutionary Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century possessed a wealth of international connections and excellent information about world forms and theories of the revolutionary movement such as no other country in the world possessed.

On the other hand, having arisen on this granite theoretical foundation, Bolshevism passed through fifteen years (1903-17) of practical history which in wealth of experience has had no equal anywhere else in the world. For no other country during these fifteen years had anything even approximating to this revolutionary experience, this rapid and varied succession of different forms of the movement—legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, underground and open, circles and mass movements, parliamentary and terrorist. In no other country was there concentrated during so short a time such a wealth of forms, shades, and methods of struggle involving *all* classes of modern society, and moreover, a struggle which, owing to the backwardness of the country and the heaviness of the yoke of tsardom, matured with exceptional rapidity and assimilated most eagerly and successfully the appropriate "last word" of American and European political experience.

III

THE PRINCIPAL STAGES IN THE HISTORY OF BOLSHEVISM

The years of preparation for the revolution (1903-05): The approach of a great storm is everywhere felt. All classes are in a state of ferment and preparation. Abroad, the press of the political refugees discusses the theoretical side of *all* the fundamental problems of the revolution. The representatives of the three main classes, of the three principal political trends, *viz.*, the liberal-bourgeois, the petty-bourgeois democratic (concealed under the labels "social-democratic" and "social-revolutionary"), and the proletarian-revolutionary trends, anticipate and prepare for the approaching open class struggle by a most bitter

fight on questions of program and tactics. All the questions around which the masses waged an armed struggle in 1905 07 and 1917 20 can (and should) be traced in their embryonic form in the press of that time Between these three main trends, there were, of course, a host of intermediate, transitional, indefinite forms Or, more correctly, in the struggle of the press, parties, factions and groups, there were crystallizing those political and ideological trends which are actually class trends, the classes forged for themselves the requisite political and ideological weapons for the impending battles

The years of revolution (1905 07) All classes come out into the open All views on program and tactics are tested by the action of the masses. There is a strike struggle unparalleled anywhere in the world for its extent and acuteness The economic strike grows into a political strike, and the latter into insurrection The relations between the proletariat, as the leader, and the vacillating, unstable peasantry, as the led, are tested in practice The Soviet form of organization is born in the spontaneous development of the struggle The controversies of that time concerning the significance of Soviets anticipate the great struggle of 1917 20 The alternation of parliamentary and non parliamentary forms of struggle, of tactics of boycotting parliamentarism and tactics of participating in parliamentarism, of legal and illegal methods of struggle, and likewise their interrelations and connections, are all distinguished by an astonishing richness of content As far as teaching the fundamentals of political science—to masses and leaders, to classes and parties—was concerned, one month of this period was equivalent to a whole year of "peaceful," "constitutional" development Without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905, the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 would have been impossible

The years of reaction (1907 10) *Tsardom is victorious* All the revolutionary and opposition parties have been defeated Depression, demoralization, splits, discord, renegacy, pornography instead of politics There is an increased drift toward philosophical idealism, mysticism serves as a cloak for counter revolutionary sentiments But at the same time, it is precisely this great defeat that gives the revolutionary parties and the revolutionary class a real and very valuable lesson, a lesson in historical dialectics, a lesson in the understanding of the political struggle and in the skill and art of waging it One gets to know one's friends in times of misfortune Defeated armies learn well

Victorious tsardom is compelled to accelerate the destruction of the remnants of the pre bourgeois, patriarchal mode of life in Russia Russia's development along bourgeois lines progresses with remarkable speed Extra class and above class illusions, illusions concerning the possibility of avoiding capitalism, are scattered to the winds The class struggle manifests itself in quite a new and, moreover, distinct form

The revolutionary parties must complete their education They have

learned to attack. Now they have to realize that this knowledge must be supplemented by the knowledge how to retreat properly. They have to realize—and the revolutionary class is taught to realize it by its own bitter experience—that victory is impossible unless they have learned both how to attack and how to retreat properly. Of all the defeated opposition and revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks effected the most orderly retreat, with the least loss to their "army," with its core best preserved, with the least (in respect to profundity and irremediability) splits, with the least demoralization, and in the best condition to resume the work on the broadest scale and in the most correct and energetic manner. The Bolsheviks achieved this only because they ruthlessly exposed and expelled the revolutionary phrasemongers, who refused to understand that one had to retreat, that one had to know how to retreat, and that one had absolutely to learn how to work legally in the most reactionary parliaments, in the most reactionary trade unions, co-operative societies, insurance societies and similar organizations.

The years of revival (1910-14): At first the revival was incredibly slow; then, after the Lena events of 1912,* it became somewhat more rapid. Overcoming unprecedented difficulties, the Bolsheviks pushed aside the Mensheviks, whose role as lieutenants of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement was perfectly understood by the whole bourgeoisie after 1905, and who were therefore supported in a thousand ways by the whole bourgeoisie against the Bolsheviks. But the Bolsheviks would never have succeeded in doing this had they not pursued the correct tactics of combining illegal work with the obligatory utilization of "legal possibilities." The Bolsheviks won all the labour seats in the arch-reactionary Duma.

The first imperialist world war (1914-17): Legal parliamentarism, with an extremely reactionary "parliament," renders very useful service to the party of the revolutionary proletariat, the Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik deputies are exiled to Siberia.** In the press of the political refugees all shades of social-imperialism, social-chauvinism, social-patriotism, inconsistent and consistent internationalism, pacifism, and the revolutionary repudiation of pacifist illusions find full expression. The wiseacres and old women of the Second International, who had arrogantly and contemptuously turned up their noses at the abundance of "factions" in the Russian Socialist movement and at the bitter struggle they waged among themselves, were unable—when the war deprived

* This refers to the shooting down of the workers of the Lena goldfields in Siberia on April 4 [17], 1912 by the tsarist troops. The miners had struck work in protest of the unbearable conditions of labour and their shameless exploitation by the management. The workers all over Russia replied to the Lena shooting by mass political strikes, demonstrations and meetings.—*Ed.*

** This refers to the Bolshevik members of the Fourth State Duma who were exiled to Siberia in 1915 on the charge of "high treason" for agitating against the imperialist war.—*Ed.*

them of their boasted "legality" in *all* the advanced countries—to organize anything even approximating such a free (illegal) interchange of views and such a free (illegal) working out of correct views as the Russian revolutionaries did in Switzerland and in a number of other countries. It was precisely because of this that both the avowed social-patriots and the "Kautskyans" of all countries proved to be the worst traitors to the proletariat. And one of the principal reasons why Bolshevism was able to attain victory in 1917-20 was that ever since the end of 1914 it had been ruthlessly exposing the baseness, loathsomeness and vileness of social-chauvinism and "Kautskyism" (to which Longuetism in France, the views of the leaders of the Independent Labour Party and the Fabians in England, of Turati in Italy, etc., correspond), and the masses later became more and more convinced by their own experience of the correctness of the Bolshevik views.

The second revolution in Russia (February to October 1917): The incredible senility and obsoleteness of tsardom had created (with the aid of the blows and burdens of a most agonizing war) an incredibly destructive power directed against tsardom. Within a few days Russia was transformed into a democratic bourgeois republic, more free—under war conditions—than any other country in the world. The leaders of the opposition and revolutionary parties began to set up a government, just as is done in the most "strictly parliamentary" republics; and the fact that a man had been a leader of an opposition party in parliament, even in a most reactionary parliament, *assisted* him in his subsequent role in the revolution

In a few weeks the Mensheviks and "Socialist-Revolutionaries" thoroughly imbibed all the methods and manners, arguments and sophistries of the European heroes of the Second International, of the ministerialists and other opportunist scum All that we now read about the Scheidemanns and Noskes, about Kautsky and Hilferding, Renner and Austerlitz, Otto Bauer and Fritz Adler, Turati and Longuet, about the Fabians and the leaders of the Independent Labour Party in England—all this seems to us, and is in reality, a dreary repetition, a reiteration of an old and familiar refrain. We have seen all this already in the case of the Mensheviks. History played a joke and made the opportunists of a backward country anticipate the opportunists of a number of advanced countries.

If the heroes of the Second International have all suffered bankruptcy and have disgraced themselves over the question of the significance and role of the Soviets and the Soviet power, if the leaders of the three very important parties which have now left the Second International (namely, the German Independent Social-Democratic Party, the French Longuetites and the British Independent Labour Party) have disgraced and entangled themselves over this question in a most "striking" way, if they have all turned out to be slaves to the prejudices of petty bourgeois democracy (quite in the spirit of the petty bourgeois of 1848 who

called themselves "Social-Democrats")—we have seen *all this already* in the case of the Mensheviks. History played a joke: in Russia, in 1905, the Soviets were born, from February to October 1917 they were turned to a false use by the Mensheviks, who went bankrupt because of their inability to understand the role and significance of the Soviets; and now the idea of Soviet power has arisen *all over the world* and is spreading among the proletariat of all countries with extraordinary rapidity. And the old heroes of the Second International are also going bankrupt *everywhere*, like our Mensheviks, because they are unable to understand the role and significance of the Soviets. Experience has proved that on some very important questions of the proletarian revolution, *all* countries will inevitably have to go through what Russia has gone through.

Contrary to the views that are now often to be met with in Europe and America, the Bolsheviks began their victorious struggle against the parliamentary (and in fact) bourgeois republic and against the Mensheviks very cautiously, and the preparations they made for it were by no means simple. We did *not* call for the overthrow of the government at the beginning of the period mentioned, but explained that it was impossible to overthrow it *until* the composition and the sentiments of the Soviets had changed. We did not proclaim a boycott of the bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, but said—and from the April (1917) Conference of our Party onwards began to say officially in the name of the Party—that a bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly is better than a bourgeois republic without a Constituent Assembly, but that a "workers' and peasants'" republic, a Soviet republic, is better than any bourgeois-democratic, parliamentary, republic. Without such careful, thorough, circumspect and prolonged preparations we could not have obtained victory in October 1917, nor have maintained that victory.

IV

IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WHAT ENEMIES WITHIN THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT DID BOLSHEVISM GROW UP AND BECOME STRONG AND STEELED?

Firstly and principally, in the struggle against opportunism, which in 1914 definitely grew into social-chauvinism and definitely sided with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Naturally, this was the principal enemy of Bolshevism in the working-class movement. This enemy remains the principal enemy internationally. It is this enemy that has claimed, and still claims, the attention of the Bolsheviks most of all. This side of the activities of the Bolsheviks is now fairly well known abroad too.

Something different, however, must be said of the other enemy of Bolshevism within the working-class movement It is not yet sufficiently known abroad that Bolshevism grew up, took shape, and became steeled in long years of struggle against *petty bourgeois revolutionism*, which smacks of, or borrows something from, anarchism, and which falls short in everything essential of the conditions and requirements of a consistently proletarian class struggle For Marxists, it is well established theoretically—and the experience of all European revolutions and revolutionary movements has fully confirmed it—that the small owner, the small master (a social type that is represented in many European countries on a very wide, a mass scale), who under capitalism always suffers oppression and, very often, an incredibly acute and rapid deterioration in his conditions of life, ending in ruin, easily goes to revolutionary extremes, but is incapable of perseverance, organization, discipline and steadfastness The petty bourgeois "driven to frenzy" by the horrors of capitalism is a social phenomenon which, like anarchism, is characteristic of all capitalist countries The instability of such revolutionism, its barrenness, its liability to become swiftly transformed into submission, apathy, fantasy, and even a "frenzied" infatuation with one or another bourgeois "fad"—all this is a matter of common knowledge But a theoretical, abstract recognition of these truths does not at all free revolutionary parties from old mistakes, which always crop up at unexpected moments, in a somewhat new form, in hitherto unknown vestments or surroundings, in peculiar—more or less peculiar—circumstances

Anarchism was often a sort of punishment for the opportunist sins of the working class movement The two monstrosities were mutually complementary And the fact that in Russia, although her population is more petty bourgeois than that of the European countries, anarchism, relatively speaking, exercised a negligible influence during both revolutions (1905 and 1917) and during the preparatory periods of these revolutions, must undoubtedly be partly placed to the credit of Bolshevism, which has always waged a most ruthless and uncompromising struggle against opportunism I say "partly," for a still more important role in weakening the influence of anarchism in Russia was played by the fact that it had had the opportunity in the past (in the seventies of the nineteenth century) to develop with exceptional luxuriance and to display its utter fallaciousness and unfitness as a guiding theory for the revolutionary class

At its inception in 1903, Bolshevism adopted the tradition of ruthless struggle against petty bourgeois, semi anarchist (or dilettante anarchist) revolutionism, the tradition which has always existed in revolutionary Social Democracy, and which struck particularly deep root with us in 1900 03, when the foundations for a mass party of the revolutionary proletariat were being laid in Russia Bolshevism took over and continued the struggle against the party which more than any other expressed the

tendencies of petty-bourgeois revolutionism, namely, the "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party, and waged this struggle on three main points. First, this party, rejecting Marxism, stubbornly refused (or, rather, was unable) to understand the need for a strictly objective estimate of the class forces and their interrelations before undertaking any political action. Secondly, this party considered itself to be particularly "revolutionary," or "Left," on account of its recognition of individual terrorism, assassination—which we Marxists emphatically rejected. Of course, we rejected individual terrorism only on the grounds of expediency, whereas people who were capable of condemning "on principle," the terrorism of the Great French Revolution, or in general, the terrorism employed by a victorious revolutionary party which is besieged by the bourgeoisie of the whole world, were ridiculed and laughed to scorn even by Plekhanov, in 1900-03, when he was a Marxist and a revolutionary. Thirdly, the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" thought it very "Left" to sneer at comparatively insignificant opportunist sins of the German Social-Democratic Party, while they themselves imitated the extreme opportunists of that party, for example, on the agrarian question, or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

History, by the way, has now confirmed on a large, world-wide and historical scale the opinion we have always advocated, *viz.*, that *revolutionary* German Social-Democracy (note that as far back as 1900-03 Plekhanov demanded the expulsion of Bernstein from the Party, and the Bolsheviks, always continuing this tradition, in 1913 exposed the utter baseness, vileness and treachery of Legien*) *came closest* to being the party which the revolutionary proletariat required to enable it to attain victory. Now, in 1920, after all the ignominious failures and crises of the period of the war and the early post-war years, it can be plainly seen that, of all the Western parties, German revolutionary Social-Democracy produced the best leaders, and recovered, recuperated, and gained new strength more rapidly than the others. This may be seen in the case both of the party of the Spartacists and the Left, proletarian wing of the "Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany," which is waging an incessant struggle against the opportunism and spinelessness of the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Ledebours and Crispiens. If we now cast a general glance over a fully completed historical period, namely, from the Paris Commune to the first Socialist Soviet Republic, we shall find that the attitude of Marxism to anarchism in general stands out most definitely and unmistakably. In the final analysis, Marxism proved to be correct,

* *Legien*—a prominent leader of the German trade union movement and a member of the Social-Democratic faction of the German Reichstag. The reference here is to the thoroughly opportunist, bourgeois-liberal speech he made before the members of the U.S.A. Congress in 1913. For further reference see: "What Should Not Be Imitated in the German Labour Movement," Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Vol. IV.—*Ed.*

and although the anarchists rightly pointed to the opportunist character of the views on the state that prevailed within the majority of the Socialist parties, it must be stated, firstly, that this opportunism was based upon the distortion, and even deliberate suppression, of Marx's views on the state (in my book, *The State and Revolution*, I called attention to the fact that for thirty six years, from 1875 to 1911, Bebel kept secret a letter by Engels which very vividly, sharply, bluntly and clearly exposed the opportunism of the stock Social-Democratic conceptions of the state), and, secondly, that it was the most Marxian trends in the European and American Socialist parties that most quickly and extensively set about the rectification of these opportunist views, the recognition of Soviet power and its superiority over bourgeois parliamentary democracy

On two occasions the struggle that Bolshevism waged against "Left" deviations within its own party assumed particularly large proportions in 1908, on the question of whether or not to participate in a most reactionary "parliament" and in the legal workers' societies, which were being restricted by most reactionary laws, and again in 1918 (the Brest-Litovsk Peace), on the question whether one or another "compromise" was ad missible

In 1908 the "Left" Bolsheviks were expelled from our Party for stubbornly refusing to understand the necessity of participating in a most reactionary "parliament" The "Lefts"—among whom there were many splendid revolutionaries who subsequently bore (and still bear) the title of member of the Communist Party with credit—based themselves particularly on the successful experiment of the boycott in 1905 When, in August 1905, the tsar announced the convocation of an advisory "parliament," the Bolsheviks—in the teeth of all the opposition parties and the Mensheviks—proclaimed a boycott of it, and it was actually swept away by the revolution of October 1905 At that time the boycott proved correct, not because non participation in reactionary parliaments is correct in general, but because we correctly gauged the objective situation which was leading to the rapid transformation of the mass strikes into a political strike, then into a revolutionary strike, and then into uprising Moreover, the struggle at that time centred around the question whether to leave the convocation of the first representative assembly to the tsar, or to attempt to wrest its convocation from the hands of the old regime When there was, and could be, no certainty that an analogous objective situation existed, and likewise no certainty of a similar trend and rate of development, the boycott ceased to be correct

The Bolshevik boycott of "parliament" in 1905 enriched the revolutionary proletariat with highly valuable political experience and showed that in combining legal with illegal, parliamentary with extra parliamentary forms of struggle, it is sometimes useful and even essential to reject parliamentary forms. But it is a very great mistake to apply this

experience blindly, imitatively and uncritically to *other* conditions and to *other* circumstances. The boycott of the "Duma" by the Bolsheviks in 1906 was, however, a mistake, although a small and easily remediable one.* A boycott of the Duma in 1907, 1908 and subsequent years would have been a serious mistake and one difficult to remedy, because, on the one hand, a very rapid rise of the revolutionary tide and its conversion into an uprising could not be expected, and, on the other hand, the whole historical situation attending the renovation of the bourgeois monarchy called for the combining of legal and illegal work. Now, looking back on this historical period, which is quite closed and the connection of which with the subsequent periods has become fully manifest, it becomes very clear that the Bolsheviks *could not have* preserved (let alone strengthened, developed and reinforced) the firm core of the revolutionary party of the proletariat in 1908-14 had they not strenuously fought for the viewpoint that it is *obligatory* to combine legal and illegal forms of struggle, that it is *obligatory* to participate even in a most reactionary parliament and in a number of other institutions that were restricted by reactionary laws (benefit societies, etc.).

In 1918 things did not go to the length of a split. The "Left" Communists at that time only formed a separate group or "faction" within our Party, and that not for long. In the same year, 1918, the most prominent representatives of "Left Communism," for example, Radek and Bukharin, openly admitted their mistake. It had seemed to them that the Brest-Litovsk Peace was a compromise with the imperialists that was inadmissible on principle and harmful to the party of the revolutionary proletariat. It really was a compromise with the imperialists, but it was a compromise which, under the circumstances, was *obligatory*.

Today, when I hear our tactics in signing the Brest-Litovsk Treaty assailed by the "Socialist-Revolutionaries," for instance, or when I hear the remark made by Comrade Lansbury in conversation with me—"Our British trade union leaders say that if it was permissible for the Bolsheviks to compromise, it is permissible for them to compromise too," I usually reply by first of all giving a simple and "popular" example:

Imagine that your automobile is held up by armed bandits. You hand them over your money, passport, revolver and automobile. In return you are relieved of the pleasant company of the bandits. That is unquestionably a compromise. "*Do ut des*" ("I give" you money, firearms, automobile, "so that you give" me the opportunity to depart in peace). But it would be difficult to find a sane man who would declare such a compromise to be "inadmissible on principle," or who would proclaim the compromiser an accomplice of the bandits (even though the bandits might use the automobile

* What applies to individuals applies—with necessary modifications—to politics and parties. Not he is wise who makes no mistakes. There are no such men nor can there be. He is wise who makes not very serious mistakes and who knows how to correct them easily and quickly.

and the firearms for further robberies) Our compromise with the bandits of German imperialism was a compromise of such a kind

But when the Mensheviks, and Socialist Revolutionaries in Russia, the Scheidemannites (and to a large extent the Kautskyans) in Germany, Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler (not to speak of Messrs Renner and Co) in Austria, the Renaudels and Longuet and Co in France, the Fabians, the "Independents" and the "Labourites" in England, in 1914 18 and in 1918 20 entered into *compromises* with the bandits of their own, and sometimes of the "Allied," bourgeoisie *against* the revolutionary proletariat of their own country, all these gentlemen did act as *accomplices in banditry*

The conclusion to be drawn is clear to reject compromises "on principle," to reject the admissibility of compromises in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to take seriously A political leader who desires to be useful to the revolutionary proletariat must know how to single out *concrete* cases when such compromises are inadmissible, as expressive of opportunism and *treachery*, and direct all the force of criticism, the full edge of merciless exposure and relentless war, against *those concrete* compromises, and not allow the highly experienced "practical" Socialists and parliamentary Jesuits to dodge and wriggle out of responsibility by resorting to arguments about "compromises in general" It is precisely in this way that Messieurs the "leaders" of the British trade unions, as well as of the Fabian society and the "Independent" Labour Party, dodge responsibility *for the treachery they have perpetrated*, for having made a compromise that *really* denotes the worst kind of opportunism, treachery and betrayal

There are compromises and compromises One must be able to analyse the situation and the concrete conditions of each compromise, or of each variety of compromise One must learn to distinguish between a man who gave the bandits money and firearms in order to lessen the evil committed by them and to facilitate the task of getting them captured and shot, and a man who gives bandits money and firearms in order to share in the loot In politics this is by no means always as easy as in this childishly simple example But anyone who set out to invent a recipe for the workers that would provide ready made solutions for all cases in life, or who promised that the politics of the revolutionary proletariat would never encounter difficult or intricate situations, would be simply a charlatan

So as to leave no room for misinterpretation, I shall attempt to outline, although very briefly, a few fundamental rules for analysing concrete compromises

The party which concluded a compromise with the German imperialists by signing the Brest Litovsk Treaty had been working out its internationalism in action ever since the end of 1914 It was not afraid to call for the defeat of the tsarist monarchy and to condemn "defence of the fatherland" in a war between two imperialist robbers The parliamentary members of

this party took the road to Siberia rather than the road leading to Ministerial portfolios in a bourgeois government. The revolution, by overthrowing tsardom and establishing a democratic republic, put this party to a new and tremendous test; this party did not enter into any agreements with its "own" imperialists, but worked for their overthrow, and did overthrow them. Having taken over political power, this party did not leave a vestige either of landlord or capitalist property. Having published and repudiated the secret treaties of the imperialists, this party proposed peace to *all* nations, and yielded to the violence of the Brest-Litovsk robbers only after the Anglo-French imperialists had frustrated peace, and after the Bolsheviks had done everything humanly possible to hasten the revolution in Germany and other countries. That such a compromise, entered into by such a party under such circumstances, was absolutely correct, becomes clearer and more evident to everyone every day.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia (like the leaders of the Second International all over the world in 1914-20) began with treachery by directly or indirectly justifying the "defence of the fatherland," that is, the defence of *their own* predatory bourgeoisie. They continued their treachery by entering into a coalition with the bourgeoisie of *their own* country and fighting together with *their own* bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat of their own country. Their bloc in Russia, first with Kerensky and the Cadets, and then with Kolchak and Denikin, like the bloc of their *confrères* abroad with the bourgeoisie of *their* respective countries, was a desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. From beginning to end, *their* compromise with the bandits of imperialism lay in the fact that they made themselves *accomplices* in imperialist banditry.

V

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM IN GERMANY: LEADERS—PARTY—CLASS—MASSES

The German Communists of whom we must now speak do not call themselves "Lefts" but, if I am not mistaken, the "opposition on principle." But that they exhibit all the symptoms of the "infantile disorder of Leftism" will be seen from what follows.

A pamphlet written from the standpoint of this opposition, and entitled *The Split in the Communist Party of Germany (The Spartacus League)*, published by "the local group in Frankfort-on-Main," sets forth the substance of the views of this opposition very concisely, clearly, briefly and distinctly. A few quotations will suffice to acquaint the reader with the substance of their views:

> "The Communist Party is the Party of the most determined class struggle. . . ."

" . Politically, this transition period [between capitalism and Socialism] is the period of the proletarian dictatorship . "

"The question arises Who should be the vehicle of this dictatorship *the Communist Party or the proletarian class?* . Should we *on principle*, strive for the dictatorship of the Communist Party, or for the dictatorship of the proletarian class?! . ." (All italics in the original)

Further, the author of the pamphlet accuses the "C C " of the Communist Party of Germany of seeking to reach a *coalition with the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany*, of raising *"the question of recognizing in principle all political means"* of struggle, including parliamentarism, only in order to conceal its real and main efforts to form a coalition with the Independents And the pamphlet goes on to say

"The opposition has chosen another road It is of the opinion that the question of the rule of the Communist Party and of the dictatorship of the Party is only a question of tactics At all events, the rule of the Communist Party is the final form of all party rule *On principle*, we must strive for the dictatorship of the proletarian class And all the measures of the Party, its organization, its methods of struggle, its strategy and tactics should be adapted to this end Accordingly, one must emphatically reject all compromise with other parties, all reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, all policy of manoeuvring and compromise Specifically proletarian methods of revolutionary struggle must be strongly emphasized In order to embrace the widest proletarian circles and strata, which are to take part in the revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party, new forms of organization must be created upon the broadest foundations and with the widest scope The rallying point for all revolutionary elements should be the *Workers' Union*, which is based on factory organizations It should embrace all the workers who follow the slogan 'Leave the trade unions!' Here the fighting proletariat should be lined up in the broadest battle ranks Recognition of the class struggle, the Soviet system and the dictatorship should be sufficient for admittance All subsequent political training of the fighting masses and their political orientation in the struggle is the task of the Communist Party, which is outside the Workers' Union

'Consequently, two Communist Parties are now arrayed one against the other

"One is a party of leaders, which strives to organize the revolutionary struggle and to direct it *from above*, resorting to compromises and parliamentarism in order to create a situation which would enable it to enter a coalition government in whose hands the dictatorship would rest

"*The other is a mass party*, which expects an upsurge of the revolutionary struggle *from below*, knowing and employing only one method in the struggle, a method which clearly leads to the goal, and rejecting all parliamentary and opportunist methods; this one method is the ruthless *overthrow of the bourgeoisie* with the object of establishing the proletarian class dictatorship for the accomplishment of Socialism. . . .

". . . There, the dictatorship of leaders; here, the dictatorship of the masses! That is our slogan."

Such are the most essential points characterizing the views of the opposition in the German Communist Party.

Any Bolshevik who has consciously participated in, or has closely observed, the development of Bolshevism since 1903 will at once say after reading these arguments, "What old and familiar rubbish! What 'Left' childishness!"

But let us examine these arguments a little more closely.

The mere presentation of the question—dictatorship of the Party *or* dictatorship of the class, dictatorship (Party) of the leaders, *or* dictatorship (Party) of the masses?"—testifies to the most incredible and hopeless confusion of mind. These people are straining to *invent* something quite out of the ordinary, and, in their effort to be clever, make themselves ridiculous. Everyone knows that the masses are divided into classes; that the masses can be contrasted to classes only by contrasting the vast majority in general, regardless of division according to status in the social system of production, to categories holding a definite status in the social system of production; that usually, and in the majority of cases, at least in modern civilized countries, classes are led by political parties; that political parties, as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders. All this is elementary. All this is simple and clear. Why, instead, do we need all this rigmarole, this new Volapük?* On the one hand, these people apparently got confused when they found themselves in a serious situation, a situation in which, the party having been abruptly reduced from a legal to an illegal status, the usual, normal and simple relations between leaders, parties and classes have been disturbed. In Germany, as in other European countries, people had become too accustomed to legality, to the free and regular election of "leaders" at regular party congresses, to the convenient method of testing the class composition of parties by parliamentary elections, mass meetings, the press, the sentiments of the trade unions and other organizations, etc. When, instead of this customary procedure, it became necessary, in consequence of the extremely rapid advance of the revolution and the development of the civil war, to pass quickly from legality to ille-

*Volapük—A universal language invented in 1879 by Johann M. Schleyer.—*Ed.*

gality, to combine the two, and to adopt the "inconvenient" and "undemocratic" methods of singling out, or forming, or preserving "groups of leaders"—these people lost their heads and began to invent unnatural nonsense. Probably, some members of the Communist Party of Holland who have had the misfortune to be born in a small country with the traditions and conditions of a particularly privileged and stable legality, and who have never witnessed the change from legality to illegality—became confused, lost their heads, and helped to create these absurd inventions.

On the other hand, we observe here just a thoughtless and incoherent use of the now "fashionable" terms "masses" and "leaders" These people have heard and committed to memory a great many attacks on "leaders," in which they are contrasted to "the masses", but they were unable to think and make it clear in their own minds what it was all about

The divergence between "leaders" and "masses" manifested itself very clearly and distinctly in all countries at the end of and after the imperialist war The principal reason for this phenomenon was explained many times by Marx and Engels between the years 1852 and 1892 by the example of England England's monopoly position caused a semi petty bourgeois, opportunist "labour aristocracy" to separate out from the "masses" The leaders of this labour aristocracy constantly deserted to the bourgeoisie, and were directly or indirectly in its pay Marx earned the honour of incurring the hatred of these scoundrels by openly branding them as traitors Modern (twentieth century) imperialism created a privileged, monopoly position for a few advanced countries, and this gave rise everywhere in the Second International to a certain type of traitor, opportunist, social chauvinist leaders, who look after the interests of their own craft, their own section of the labour aristocracy This caused the isolation of the opportunist parties from the "masses," that is, from the broadest sections of the working people, from their majority, from the lowest paid workers The victory of the revolutionary proletariat is impossible unless this evil is combated, unless the opportunist, social traitor leaders are exposed, discredited and expelled And that is the policy pursued by the Third International

To go so far in this connection as to contrast, in general, dictatorship of the masses to dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd and stupid What is particularly funny is that actually, in place of the old leaders, who hold the common human views on ordinary matters, *new leaders* are put forth (under cover of the slogan "Down with the leaders!") who talk unnatural stuff and nonsense Such are Lauffenberg, Wolfheim, Horner, Karl Schroder, Friedrich Wendel and Karl Erler* in Germany The attempts of

---

* *Karl Erler* The Dissolution of the Party " *Kommunistische Arbeiterzeitung,* Hamburg February 7 1920 No 32 The working class cannot destroy the bourgeois state without destroying bourgeois democracy, and it cannot destroy bourgeois democracy without destroying parties "

The most muddle headed of the syndicalists and anarchists of the Latin countries may derive "satisfaction" from the fact that solid Germans, who

the last-named to make the question "more profound" and to proclaim that political parties are generally unnecessary and "bourgeois" are such Herculean pillars of absurdity that one can only shrug one's shoulders. How true it is that a little mistake can always be turned into a monstrous one if it is persisted in, if profound reasons are given for it, and if it is driven to its "logical conclusion."

What the opposition *has come to* is the repudiation of the party principle and of party discipline. And this is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat *in the interest of the bourgeoisie.* It is tantamount to that petty-bourgeois diffuseness, instability, incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organized action, which, if indulged in, must inevitably destroy every proletarian revolutionary movement. From the standpoint of Communism, the repudiation of the party principle means trying to leap from the eve of the collapse of capitalism (in Germany), not to the lowest, or the intermediate, but to the highest phase of Communism. We in Russia (in the third year since the overthrow of the bourgeoisie) are taking the first steps in the transition from capitalism to Socialism, or the lowest stage of Communism. Classes have remained, and will remain everywhere *for years after* the conquest of power by the proletariat. Perhaps in England, where there is no peasantry (but where there are small owners!), the period may be shorter. The abolition of classes means not only driving out the landlords and capitalists—that we accomplished with comparative ease—it also means *abolishing the small commodity producers*, and they *cannot be driven out*, or crushed; we *must live in harmony* with them; they can (and must) be remoulded and re-educated only by very prolonged, slow, cautious organizational work. They encircle the proletariat on every side with a petty-bourgeois atmosphere, which permeates and corrupts the proletariat and causes constant relapses among the proletariat into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disunity, individualism, and alternate moods of exaltation and dejection. The strictest centralization and discipline are required within the political party of the proletariat in order to counteract this, in order that the *organizational* role of the proletariat (and that is its *principal* role) may be exercised correctly, successfully, victoriously. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the

evidently consider themselves Marxists (K. Erler and K. Horner show very solidly by their articles in the above-mentioned paper that they consider themselves solid Marxists, but talk incredible nonsense in a most ridiculous manner and reveal their lack of understanding of the rudiments of Marxism), go to the length of making utterly inept statements. The mere acceptance of Marxism does not save one from mistakes. We Russians know this particularly well, because in our country Marxism has been very often the "fashion."

given class, without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle successfully. It is a thousand times easier to vanquish the centralized big bourgeoisie than to "vanquish" the millions and millions of small owners; yet they, by their ordinary, everyday, imperceptible, elusive, demoralizing activity, achieve the *very* results which the bourgeoisie need and which tend to *restore* the bourgeoisie. Whoever weakens ever so little the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during the time of its dictatorship), actually aids the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

Side by side with the question of leaders—party—class—masses, one must discuss the question of the "reactionary" trade unions. But first I shall take the liberty of making a few concluding remarks based on the experience of our Party. There *have always been* attacks on the "dictatorship of leaders" in our Party. The first time I heard such attack, I recall, was in 1895, when, officially, no party yet existed, but when a central group began to be formed in St. Petersburg* which was to undertake the leadership of the district groups. At the Ninth Congress of our Party (April 1920) there was a small opposition which also spoke against the "dictatorship of leaders," against the "oligarchy," and so on. There is therefore nothing surprising, nothing new, nothing terrible in the "infantile disorder" of "Left-wing Communism" among the Germans. It is not a dangerous illness, and after it the constitution becomes even stronger. On the other hand, in our case, the rapid alternation of legal and illegal work, which made it particularly necessary to "conceal," to cloak in particular secrecy precisely the General Staff, precisely the leaders, sometimes gave rise to extremely dangerous phenomena. The worst was in 1912, when an agent-provocateur by the name of Malinovsky got on to the Bolshevik Central Committee. He betrayed scores and scores of the best and most loyal comrades, caused them to be sent to penal servitude and hastened the death of many of them. He did not cause more harm than he actually did only because we had established a proper combination of legal and illegal work. As a member of the Central Committee of the Party and a deputy in the Duma, Malinovsky was forced, in order to gain our confidence, to aid us in establishing legal daily papers, which even under tsardom were able to wage a struggle against the opportunism of the Mensheviks and to preach the fundamentals of Bolshevism in a suitably disguised form. While Malinovsky with one hand sent scores and scores of the best Bolsheviks to penal servitude and to death, he was obliged with the other to assist in the education of scores and scores of thousands of new Bolsheviks through the medium of the legal press. It will not harm those German (as well as British, American, French and Italian)

* The reference here is to the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class founded by Lenin in 1895 in St. Petersburg. The St. Petersburg League united all the Marxist workers' circles into a single, centralized organization and paved the way for the founding of a revolutionary, proletarian party in Russia.—*Ed.*

comrades who are confronted with the task of learning how to carry on revolutionary work inside the reactionary trade unions to give serious thought to this fact.*

In many countries, including the most advanced, the bourgeoisie is undoubtedly now sending agents-provocateurs into the Communist Parties, and will continue to do so. One method of combating this peril is by a skilful combination of legal and illegal work.

VI

SHOULD REVOLUTIONARIES WORK IN REACTIONARY TRADE UNIONS?

The German "Lefts" consider that as far as they are concerned the reply to this question is an unqualified negative. In their opinion, declamations and angry ejaculations (such as uttered by K. Horner in a particularly "solid" and particularly stupid manner) against "reactionary" and "counter-revolutionary" trade unions are sufficient "proof" that it is unnecessary and even impermissible for revolutionaries and Communists to work in yellow, social-chauvinist, compromising, counter-revolutionary trade unions of the Legien type.

But however strongly the German "Lefts" may be convinced of the revolutionariness of such tactics, these tactics are in fact fundamentally wrong, and consist of nothing but empty phrasemongering.

In order to make this clear, I shall begin with our own experience—in conformity with the general plan of the present pamphlet, the object of which is to apply to Western Europe whatever is of general application, general validity and generally binding force in the history and the present tactics of Bolshevism.

The correlation between leaders—party—class—masses, as well as the relation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its party to the trade unions, now present themselves concretely in Russia in the following form: the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat, organized in the Soviets; the proletariat is led by the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which, according to the data of the last Party Congress (April 1920), has a membership of 611,000. The membership fluctuated considerably both before and

* Malinovsky was a prisoner-of-war in Germany. When he returned to Russia under the rule of the Bolsheviks, he was instantly put on trial and shot by our workers. The Mensheviks attacked us most bitterly for our mistake in allowing an agent-provocateur to become a member of the Central Committee of our Party. But when, under Kerensky, we demanded the arrest and trial of Rodzyanko, the Speaker of the Duma, because he had known even before the war that Malinovsky was an agent-provocateur and *had not informed* the Trudoviki and the workers in the Duma of this fact, neither the Mensheviks nor the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Kerensky's cabinet supported our demand, and Rodzyanko remained at large and went off unhindered to join Denikin.

after the October Revolution, and was formerly considerably less, even in 1918 and 1919 We are afraid of an excessive growth of the Party, as careerists and charlatans, who deserve only to be shot, inevitably strive to attach themselves to the ruling party The last time we opened wide the doors of the Party—for workers and peasants only—was during the days (the winter of 1919) when Yudenich was within a few versts of Petrograd, and Denikin was in Orel (about 350 versts from Moscow), that is, when the Soviet Republic was in desperate, mortal danger, and when adventurers, careerists, charlatans and unreliable persons generally could not possibly count on making a profitable career (and had more reason to expect the gallows and torture) by joining the Communists The Party, which holds annual congresses (the last on the basis of one delegate for each 1,000 members), is directed by a Central Committee of nineteen elected at the congress, while the current work in Moscow has to be carried on by still smaller bodies, *viz* , the so called "Orgburo" (Organization Bureau) and "Politburo" (Political Bureau), which are elected at plenary meetings of the Central Committee, five members of the Central Committee to each bureau This, then, looks like a real "oligarchy " Not a single important political or organizational question is decided by any state institution in our republic without the guiding instructions of the Central Committee of the Party

In its work, the Party relies directly on the *trade unions*, which, at present, according to the data of the last congress (April 1920), have over 4,000,000 members, and which are formally *non party* Actually, all the directing bodies of the vast majority of the unions, and primarily, of course, of the all Russian general trade union centre or bureau (the All Russian Central Trade Union Council) consist of Communists and carry out all the instructions of the Party Thus, on the whole, we have a formally non Communist, flexible and relatively wide and very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is closely linked up with the *class* and with the *masses*, and by means of which, under the leadership of the Party, the *dictatorship of the class* is exercised Without close contact with the trade unions, without their hearty support and self sacrificing work, not only in economic, *but also in military* affairs, it would, of course, have been impossible for us to govern the country and to maintain the dictatorship for two months, let alone two years Of course, in practice, this close contact calls for very complicated and diversified work [illegible] timely and frequent conferences, not [illegible] workers, but with influential trade [illegible] determined struggle against the Mensheviks, who still have a certain, though very small, number of adherents, whom they teach all possible counter revolutionary tricks, from ideologically defending democracy (*bourgeois*) and preaching that the trade unions should be "independent" (independent of the proletarian state!) to sabotaging proletarian discipline, etc , etc

We consider that contact with the "masses" through trade unions is not enough. Our practical experience during the course of the revolution has given rise to *non-party workers' and peasants' conferences*, and we strive by every means to support, develop and extend this institution in order to be able to watch the sentiments of the masses, to come closer to them, to respond to their requirements, to promote the best among them to state posts, etc. Under a recent decree on the transformation of the People's Commissariat of State Control into the "Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate," non-party conferences of this kind enjoy the right of electing members to the State Control for various kinds of investigations, etc.

Then, of course, all the work of the Party is carried on through the Soviets, which embrace the working masses irrespective of occupation. The district congresses of Soviets are *democratic* institutions the like of which even the best of the democratic republics of the bourgeois world has never known; and through these congresses (whose proceedings the Party endeavours to follow with the closest attention), as well as by continually appointing class-conscious workers to all sorts of posts in the rural districts, the role of the proletariat as leader of the peasantry is exercised, the dictatorship of the urban proletariat is realized, a systematic struggle against the rich, bourgeois, exploiting and profiteering peasantry is waged, etc.

Such is the general mechanism of the proletarian state viewed "from above," from the standpoint of the practical realization of the dictatorship. It is to be hoped that the reader will understand why, to a Russian Bolshevik who is acquainted with this mechanism and who for twenty-five years has watched it growing out of small, illegal, underground circles, all talk about "from above" *or* "from below," about the dictatorship of leaders *or* the dictatorship of the masses, etc., cannot but appear to be ridiculous and childish nonsense, something like discussing whether a man's left leg or right arm is more useful to him.

And we cannot but regard as equally ridiculous and childish nonsense the pompous, very learned, and frightfully revolutionary disquisitions of the German Lefts to the effect that Communists cannot and should not work in reactionary trade unions, that it is permissible to refuse to do such work, that it is necessary to leave the trade unions and to create an absolutely brand-new, immaculate "Workers' Union" invented by very nice (and, probably, for the most part very youthful) Communists, etc., etc.

Capitalism inevitably bequeaths to Socialism, on the one hand, old trade and craft distinctions among the workers, distinctions evolved in the course of centuries; and, on the other hand, trade unions which only very slowly, in the course of years and years, can and will develop into broader, industrial unions with less of the craft union about them (embracing whole industries, and not only crafts, trades and occupa-

tions), and later proceed, through these industrial unions, to the abolition of the division of labour among people, to the education, schooling and training of people with *an all round development and an all-round* training, people *able to do everything* Communism is marching and must march towards this goal, and *will reach it*, but only after very many years. To attempt in practice today to anticipate this future result of a fully developed, fully stabilized and formed, fully expanded and mature Communism would be like trying to teach higher mathematics to a four-year old child

We can (and must) begin to build Socialism, not with imaginary human material, not with human material invented by us, but with the human material bequeathed to us by capitalism That is very "difficult," it goes without saying, but no other approach to this task is serious enough to warrant discussion

The trade unions were a tremendous progressive step for the working class at the beginning of the development of capitalism, inasmuch as they represented a transition from the disunity and helplessness of the workers to the *rudiments* of class organization When the *highest* form of proletarian class organization began to arise, *viz* , the *revolutionary party of the proletariat* (which will not deserve the name until it learns to bind the leaders with the class and the masses into one single indissoluble whole), the trade unions inevitably began to reveal *certain* reactionary features, a certain craft narrowness, a certain tendency to be non political, a certain inertness, etc But the development of the proletariat did not, and could not, proceed anywhere in the world otherwise than through the trade unions, through reciprocal action between them and the party of the working class The conquest of political power by the proletariat is a gigantic forward step for the proletariat as a class, and the Party must more than ever and in a new way, not only in the old way, educate and guide the trade unions, at the same time not forgetting that they are and will long remain an indispensable "school of Communism" and a preparatory school in which to train the proletarians to exercise their dictatorship, an indispensable organization of the workers for the gradual transfer of the management of the whole economic life of the country to the working *class* (and not to the separate trades), and later to all the working people

A *certain* amount of "reactionariness" in the trade unions, in the sense mentioned, is *inevitable* under the dictatorship of the proletariat He who does not understand this utterly fails to understand the fundamental conditions of the *transition* from capitalism to Socialism To fear *this* "reactionariness," to try to *avoid* it, to skip it, would be the greatest folly, for it would be fearing that function of the proletarian vanguard which consists in training, educating, enlightening and drawing into the new life the most backward strata and masses of the working class and the peasantry On the other hand, to postpone the achievement of

the dictatorship of the proletariat until a time comes when not a single worker with a narrow craft outlook, not a single worker with craft and craft-union prejudices is left, would be a still greater mistake. The art of politics (and the Communist's correct understanding of his tasks) lies in correctly gauging the conditions and the moment when the vanguard of the proletariat can successfully seize power, when it is able, during and after the seizure of power, to obtain adequate support from adequately broad strata of the working class and of the non-proletarian working masses, and when it is able thereafter to maintain, consolidate and extend its rule by educating, training and attracting ever broader masses of the working people.

Further: in countries which are more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionariness in the trade unions has been manifested, and was undoubtedly bound to be manifested, to a much stronger degree than in our country. Our Mensheviks found (and, in a very few trade unions, still find to some extent) support in the trade unions precisely because of the narrow craft spirit, craft egotism and opportunism. The Mensheviks of the West have acquired a much firmer "footing" in the trade unions; there the *craft-union, narrow-minded, selfish, unfeeling, covetous, petty-bourgeois "labour aristocracy," imperialistically-minded and bribed and corrupted by imperialism*, represents a much stronger stratum than in our country. That is incontestable. The struggle against the Gompersès, against Messrs. Jouhaux, Henderson, Merrheim, Legien and Co. in Western Europe is much more difficult than the struggle against our Mensheviks, who represent an *absolutely homogeneous* social and political type. This struggle must be waged ruthlessly, and it must at all costs be waged, as we waged it, until all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism have been completely discredited and driven out of the trade unions. It is impossible to capture political power (and the attempt to capture it should not be made) until this struggle has reached a *certain* stage. This "certain stage" *will be different* in different countries and in different circumstances; it can be correctly gauged only by thoughtful, experienced and well-informed political leaders of the proletariat in each separate country. (In Russia, one among other criteria of the success of this struggle was the elections to the Constituent Assembly in November 1917, a few days after the proletarian revolution of October 25, 1917. In these elections the Mensheviks were utterly defeated; they obtained 700,000 votes—1,400,000 if the vote of Transcaucasia be added—as against 9,000,000 votes obtained by the Bolsheviks. See my article, "The Elections to the Constituent Assembly and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," in the *Communist International*, No. 7-8.)

But we wage the struggle against the "labour aristocracy" in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them to our side; we waged the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class to our side. To forget this most element-

ary and self evident truth would be stupid But it is just this stupidity the German "Left" Communists are guilty of when, *because* of the reactionary and counter revolutionary character of the *heads* of the trade unions, they jump to the conclusion that . . . we must leave the trade unions!! that we must refuse to work in them!! that we must create new and *artificial* forms of labour organization!! This is such an unpardonable blunder that it is the greatest service the Communists could render the bourgeoisie For our Mensheviks, like all the opportunist, social chauvinist, Kautskyite trade union leaders, are nothing but "agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement" (as we have always said the Mensheviks were), or "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class," to use the splendid and absolutely true expression of the followers of Daniel DeLeon in America To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward masses of the workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie, the labour aristocrats, or the "workers who have become completely bourgeois" (*cf* Engels' letter to Marx in 1852 about the British workers)

It is just this absurd "theory" that Communists must not belong to reactionary trade unions that most clearly shows how frivolous is the attitude of the "Left" Communists towards the question of influencing "the masses," and to what abuses they go in their vociferations about "the masses" If you want to help "the masses" and to win the sympathy, confidence and support of "the masses," you must not fear difficulties, you must not fear the pin pricks, chicanery, insults and persecution of the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must imperatively *work wherever the masses are to be found* You must be capable of every sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently, precisely in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most reactionary—in which proletarian or semi proletarian masses are to be found And the trade unions and workers' co operatives (the latter sometimes, at least) are precisely organizations where the masses are to be found According to figures quoted in the Swedish paper *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* on March 10, 1920, the membership of the trade unions in Great Britain increased from 5,500,000 at the end of 1917 to 6 600,000 at the end of 1918, an increase of 19 per cent At the end of 1919 the membership was estimated at 7,500,000 I have not at hand the corresponding figures for France and Germany, but perfectly incontestable and generally known facts testify to a rapid growth of trade union membership in these countries as well

These facts very clearly indicate what is confirmed by thousands of other symptoms, namely, that class consciousness and the desire for organization are growing precisely among the proletarian masses, among

the "rank and file," among the backward elements. Millions of workers in Great Britain, France and Germany are *for the first time* passing from a complete lack of organization to the elementary, lowest, most simple, and (for those still thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices) most easily comprehensible form of organization, namely, the trade unions; yet the revolutionary, but foolish, Left Communists stand by, shouting "the masses, the masses!"—and *refuse to work in the trade unions*!! refuse on the pretext that they are "reactionary"!! and invent a brand-new, immaculate little "Workers' Union," which is guiltless of bourgeois-democratic prejudices and innocent of craft or narrow craft-union sins, which, they claim, will be (will be!) a wide organization, and the only (only!) condition of membership of which will be "recognition of the Soviet system and the dictatorship"!! (See passage quoted above.)

Greater foolishness and greater damage to the revolution than that caused by the "Left" revolutionaries cannot be imagined! Why, if we in Russia today, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make "recognition of the dictatorship" a condition of trade union membership, we should be committing a folly, we should be damaging our influence over the masses, we should be helping the Mensheviks. For the whole task of the Communists is to be able to *convince* the backward elements, to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them by artificial and childishly "Left" slogans.

There can be no doubt that people like Gompers, Henderson, Jouhaux, and Legien are very grateful to "Left" revolutionaries who, like the German opposition "on principle" (heaven preserve us from such "principles"!), or like some of the revolutionaries in the American Industrial Workers of the World, advocate leaving the reactionary trade unions and refusing to work in them. There can be no doubt that those gentlemen, the "leaders" of opportunism, will resort to every trick of bourgeois diplomacy, to the aid of bourgeois governments, the priests, the police and the courts, to prevent Communists joining the trade unions, to force them out by every means, to make their work in the trade unions as unpleasant as possible, to insult, bait and persecute them. We must be able to withstand all this, to agree to any sacrifice, and even—if need be—to resort to all sorts of stratagems, artifices, illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges, only so as to get into the trade unions, to remain in them, and to carry on Communist work within them at all costs. Under tsardom we had no "legal possibilities" whatever until 1905; but when Zubatov,* a secret police agent, organized Black-Hundred workers' assemblies and workingmen's societies for the purpose of trapping revolutionaries and combating them, we sent members of our Party to these

---

* *S.V. Zubatov* (1863-1917)—Chief of the Moscow *Okhrana*, initiator of "police socialism," *i.e.*, the pseudo workers' organizations founded under the auspices

assemblies and into these societies (I personally remember one of them, Comrade Babushkin, a prominent St. Petersburg workingman, who was shot by the tsar's generals in 1906). They established contacts with the masses, managed to carry on their agitation, and succeeded in wresting workers from the influence of Zubatov's agents.* Of course, in Western Europe, where legalistic, constitutionalist, bourgeois democratic prejudices are very deeply ingrained, it is more difficult to carry on such work. But it can and should be carried on, and carried on systematically.

The Executive Committee of the Third International must, in my opinion, positively condemn, and call upon the next congress of the Communist International to condemn, both the policy of refusing to join reactionary trade unions in general (explaining in detail why such refusal is unwise, and what extreme harm it does to the cause of the proletarian revolution) and, in particular, the line of conduct of some members of the Communist Party of Holland, who—whether directly or indirectly, openly or covertly, wholly or partly does not matter—supported this erroneous policy. The Third International must break with the tactics of the Second International, it must not evade or gloss over sore points, but must put them bluntly. The whole truth has been put squarely to the "Independents" (the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany), the whole truth must likewise be put squarely to the "Left" Communists.

VII

SHOULD WE PARTICIPATE IN BOURGEOIS PARLIAMENTS?

The German "Left" Communists, with the greatest contempt—and with the greatest frivolity—reply to this question in the negative. Their arguments? In the passage quoted above we read:

> "... One must emphatically reject ... all reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete...."

This is said with absurd pretentiousness, and is obviously incorrect. "Reversion" to parliamentarism? Perhaps there is already a Soviet republic in Germany! It does not look like it! How, then, is it possible to speak of "reversion"? Is it not an empty phrase?

---

of the tsarist gendarmes and police with the aim of diverting the attention of the workers from the revolutionary movement.—*Ed.*

* The Gomperses, Hendersons, Jouhaux and Legiens are nothing but Zubatovs, differing from our Zubatov only in their European dress, in their outward polish, in their civilized, refined, democratically sleek manner of conducting their despicable policy.

Parliamentarism has become "historically obsolete." That is true as regards propaganda. But everyone knows that this is still a long way from overcoming it *practically*. Capitalism could have been declared, and with full justice, to be "historically obsolete" many decades ago, but that does not at all remove the need for a very long and very persistent struggle *on the soil* of capitalism. Parliamentarism is "historically obsolete" from the standpoint of *world history*, that is to say, the *era* of bourgeois parliamentarism has come to an end and the *era* of the proletarian dictatorship has *begun*. That is incontestable. But when dealing with world *history*, one counts in decades. Ten or twenty years sooner or later makes no difference when measured by the scale of world history; from the standpoint of world history it is a trifle that cannot be calculated even approximately. But that is precisely why it is a howling theoretical blunder to measure questions of practical politics with the scale of world history.

Is parliamentarism "politically obsolete"? That is quite another matter. If it were true, the position of the "Lefts" would be a strong one. But it has to be proved by a most searching analysis, and the "Lefts" do not even know how to set about it. In the "Theses on Parliamentarism," which were published in the *Bulletin of the Provisional Bureau in Amsterdam of the Communist International*, No. 1, February 1920, and which obviously express the Dutch-Left or Left-Dutch strivings, the analysis, as we shall see, is also a very bad one.

In the first place, contrary to the opinion of such prominent political leaders as Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, the German "Lefts," as we know, considered parliamentarism to be "politically obsolete" even in January 1919. We know that the "Lefts" were mistaken. This fact alone at one stroke utterly destroys the proposition that parliamentarism is "politically obsolete." The obligation falls upon the "Lefts" of proving why their error, indisputable at that time, has now ceased to be an error. They do not, and cannot, produce even a shadow of proof. The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it *in practice* fulfils its obligations towards its *class* and the toiling *masses*. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions which led to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the *class*, and then the *masses*. By failing to fulfil this duty, by failing to give the utmost attention, care and consideration to the study of their obvious mistake, the "Lefts" in Germany (and in Holland), have proved that they are not a *party of the class*, but a circle, not a *party of the masses*, but a group of intellectuals and of a few workers who imitate the worst features of intellectualism.

Secondly, in the same pamphlet of the Frankfurt group of "Lefts" that we have already cited in detail, we read:

> "The millions of workers who still follow the policy of the Centre [the Catholic "Centre" Party] are counter-revolutionary. The rural proletarians provide legions of counter-revolutionary troops." (Page 3 of the pamphlet.)

Everything goes to show that this statement is too sweeping and exaggerated. But the basic fact set forth here is incontrovertible, and its acknowledgement by the "Lefts" very clearly testifies to their mistake. How can one say that "parliamentarism is politically obsolete," when "millions" and "legions" of *proletarians* are not only still in favour of parliamentarism in general, but are downright "counter-revolutionary"!? Clearly, parliamentarism in Germany is *not yet* politically obsolete. Clearly, the "Lefts" in Germany have mistaken *their desire*, their political-ideological attitude, for actual fact. That is the most dangerous mistake revolutionaries can make. In Russia—where, over a very long period and in very varied forms, the extremely fierce and savage yoke of tsardom produced revolutionaries of diverse shades, revolutionaries who displayed astonishing devotion, enthusiasm, heroism and strength of will—we have observed this mistake of the revolutionaries very closely, we have studied it very attentively and are very well acquainted with it, and we can therefore notice it very clearly in others. Parliamentarism, of course, is "politically obsolete" for the Communists in Germany, but—and that is the whole point—we must not regard what is obsolete *for us* as being obsolete *for the class*, as being obsolete *for the masses*. Here again we find that the "Lefts" do not know how to reason, do not know how to conduct themselves as the party of the *class*, as the party of the *masses*. You must not sink to the level of the masses, to the level of the backward strata of the class. That is incontestable. You must tell them the bitter truth. You must call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices—prejudices. But at the same time you must *soberly* observe the *actual* state of class consciousness and preparedness of the whole class (not only of its Communist vanguard), of all the toiling *masses* (not only of their advanced elements).

Even if not "millions" and "legions," but only a fairly large *minority* of industrial workers follow the Catholic priests—and a similar minority of rural workers follow the landlords and kulaks (*Grossbauern*)—it *undoubtedly* follows that parliamentarism in Germany is *not yet* politically obsolete, that participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the platform of parliament is *obligatory* for the party of the revolutionary proletariat *precisely* for the purpose of educating the backward strata of *its own class*, precisely for the purpose of awakening and enlightening the undeveloped, downtrodden, ignorant rural *masses*. As long as you are unable to disperse the bourgeois parliament and every other type of

reactionary institution, you *must* work inside them *precisely* because there you will still find workers who are doped by the priests and by the dreariness of rural life; otherwise you risk becoming mere babblers.

Thirdly, the "Left" Communists have a great deal to say in praise of us Bolsheviks. One sometimes feels like telling them to praise us less and try to understand the tactics of the Bolsheviks more, to familiarize themselves with them more! We took part in the elections to the Russian bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, in September-November 1917. Were our tactics correct or not? If not, then this should be clearly stated and proved, for it is essential in working out correct tactics for international Communism. If they were correct, certain conclusions must be drawn. Of course, there can be *no* parallel between conditions in Russia and conditions in Western Europe. But as regards the special question of the meaning of the idea that "parliamentarism has become politically obsolete," it is essential to take careful account of our experience, for unless definite experience is taken into account such concepts very easily turn into empty phrases. Did not we, the Russian Bolsheviks, have more right in September-November 1917 than any Western Communists to consider that parliamentarism was politically obsolete in Russia? Of course we did, for the point is not whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long or a short time, but how far the broad mass of the working people are *prepared* (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the Soviet system and to disperse the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dispersed). That, owing to a number of special conditions, the urban working class and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were in September-November 1917 exceptionally well prepared to accept the Soviet system and to disperse the most democratic of bourgeois parliaments, is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did *not* boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections both before the proletariat conquered political power and *after*. That these elections yielded exceedingly valuable (and for the proletariat, highly useful) political results I have proved, I confidently hope, in the above-mentioned article, which analyses in detail the figures of the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia.

The conclusion which follows from this is absolutely incontrovertible; it has been proved that participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament even a few weeks before the victory of a Soviet republic, and even *after* such a victory, not only does not harm the revolutionary proletariat, but actually helps it to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be dispersed; it *helps* their successful dispersal, and *helps* to make bourgeois parliamentarism "politically obsolete." To refuse to take this experience into account, and at the same time to claim affiliation to the Communist *International*, which must work out its tactics *internationally* (not narrow or one-sided national tactics, but international

tactics), is to commit the gravest blunder and actually to retreat from internationalism while paying lip service to it.

Now let us examine the "Dutch-Left" arguments in favour of non-participation in parliaments. The following is the text of the most important of the above-mentioned "Dutch" theses, Thesis No. 4:

> "When the capitalist system of production has broken down and society is in a state of revolution, parliamentary activity gradually loses its significance compared with the action of the masses themselves. When, under these conditions, parliament becomes a centre and an organ of counter-revolution, while on the other hand the working class is creating the instruments of its power in the form of Soviets, it may even become necessary to abstain from all participation in parliamentary activity."

The first sentence is obviously wrong, since the action of the masses—a big strike, for instance—is more important than parliamentary activity at *all* times, and not only during a revolution or in a revolutionary situation. This obviously untenable and historically and politically incorrect argument only very clearly shows that the authors absolutely ignore both the general European experience (the French experience before the revolutions of 1848 and 1870; the German experience of 1878 to 1890, etc.) and the Russian experience (see above) as to the importance of *combining* a legal struggle with an illegal struggle. This question is of immense importance in general, and it is of immense importance in particular because in *all* civilized and advanced countries the time is rapidly approaching when such a combination will become—in part it has already become—more and more obligatory for the party of the revolutionary proletariat owing to the fact that civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is maturing and approaching, owing to the fierce persecution of the Communists by republican governments and bourgeois governments generally, which are prepared to resort to any violation of legality (take the example of America alone!), and so on. The Dutch, and the Lefts in general, have utterly failed to understand this very important question.

As for the second sentence, in the first place it is wrong historically. We Bolsheviks participated in the most counter-revolutionary parliaments, and experience has shown that this participation was not only useful but essential for the party of the revolutionary proletariat precisely after the first bourgeois revolution in Russia (1905) in order to prepare the way for the second bourgeois revolution (February 1917), and then for the Socialist revolution (October 1917). In the second place, this sentence is amazingly illogical. If parliament becomes an organ and a "centre" (in reality it never has been and never can be a "centre," but that by the way) of counter-revolution, while the workers are creating the instruments of their power in the form of Soviets, it logically follows that the workers must

prepare—ideologically, politically and technically—for the struggle of the Soviets against parliament, for the dispersal of parliament by the Soviets. But it does not follow that this dispersal is hindered, or is not facilitated, by the presence of a Soviet opposition *within* the counter-revolutionary parliament. During the course of our victorious struggle against Denikin and Kolchak, we never found the existence of a Soviet, proletarian opposition in their camp to be immaterial to our victories. We know perfectly well that we were not hindered but assisted in dispersing the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918, by the fact that within the counter-revolutionary Constituent Assembly about to be dispersed there was a consistent, Bolshevik, as well as an inconsistent, Left Socialist-Revolutionary, Soviet opposition. The authors of the theses are utterly confused and have forgotten the experience of many, if not all, revolutions, which shows how very useful during a revolution is a combination of mass action outside the reactionary parliament with an opposition sympathetic to (or, better still, directly supporting) the revolution inside it. The Dutch, and the "Lefts" in general, argue like doctrinaire revolutionaries who have never taken part in a real revolution, or who have never deeply pondered over the history of revolutions, or who have naively mistaken the subjective "rejection" of a certain reactionary institution for its actual destruction by the combination of a number of objective factors.

The surest way of discrediting and damaging a new political (and not only political) idea is to reduce it to absurdity on the pretext of defending it. For every truth, if "overdone" (as Dietzgen senior put it), if exaggerated, if carried beyond the limits of its actual applicability, can be reduced to absurdity, and, under the conditions mentioned, is even bound to become an absurdity. That is just the kind of backhanded service the Dutch and German Lefts are rendering the new truth that the Soviet form of government is superior to bourgeois-democratic parliaments. Of course, anyone who would say in the old way, or in general, that refusal to participate in bourgeois parliaments is impermissible under any circumstances would be wrong. I cannot attempt to formulate here the conditions under which a boycott is useful, for the object of this pamphlet is far more modest, namely, to study Russian experience in connection with certain topical questions of international Communist tactics. Russian experience has given us one successful and correct (1905) and one incorrect (1906) example of the application of the boycott by the Bolsheviks. Analysing the first case, we see that we succeeded in *preventing the convocation* of a reactionary parliament by a reactionary government in a situation in which extra-parliamentary, revolutionary mass action (strikes in particular) was growing with exceptional rapidity, when not a single section of the proletariat and of the peasantry could support the reactionary government in any way, when the revolutionary proletariat was acquiring influence over the broad, backward masses

by means of the strike struggle and the agrarian movement It is quite obvious that *this* experience is not applicable to present day European conditions It is also quite obvious, on the strength of the foregoing arguments, that the advocacy, even if with reservations, by the Dutch and other 'Lefts" of refusing to participate in parliaments is fundamentally wrong and detrimental to the cause of the revolutionary proletariat

In Western Europe and America parliament has become an object of especial hatred to the advanced revolutionary members of the working class That is incontestable It is quite comprehensible, for it is difficult to imagine anything more vile, abominable and treacherous than the behaviour of the vast majority of the Socialist and Social Democratic parliamentary deputies during and after the war But it would be not only unreasonable, but actually criminal to yield to this mood when deciding *how* this generally recognized evil should be fought In many countries of Western Europe the revolutionary mood, we might say, is at present a "novelty,' or a "rarity," which had been all too long waited for vainly and impatiently, and perhaps that is why the mood is so easily succumbed to Of course, without a revolutionary mood among the masses, and without conditions favouring the growth of this mood, revolutionary tactics would never be converted into action, but we in Russia have been convinced by long, painful and bloody experience of the truth that revolutionary tactics cannot be built on revolutionary moods alone Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective estimation of *all* the class forces in a given state (and in neighbouring states, and in all states the world over) as well as of the experience of revolutionary movements To show how "revolutionary" one is solely by hurling abuse at parliamentary opportunism, solely by repudiating participation in parliaments, is very easy, but just because it is too easy it is not the solution for a difficult, a very difficult problem It is much more difficult to create a really revolutionary parliamentary group in a European parliament than it was in Russia Of course But that is only a particular expression of the general truth that it was easy for Russia, in the specific, historically very unique situation of 1917, to *start* the Socialist revolution, but that it will be more difficult for Russia than for the European countries to *continue* the revolution and bring it to its consummation I had occasion to point this out even at the beginning of 1918, and our experience of the past two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this view Certain specific conditions, *viz* 1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet revolution with the ending (as a consequence of this revolution) of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible degree, 2) the possibility of taking advantage for a certain time of the mortal conflict between two world powerful groups of imperialist robbers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy, 3) the possibility of enduring a compa

ratively lengthy civil war, partly owing to the enormous size of the country and to the poor means of communication; 4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the party of the proletariat was able to take the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the majority of the members of which were definitely hostile to Bolshevism) and realize them at once, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat—these specific conditions do not exist in Western Europe at present; and a repetition of such or similar conditions will not come so easily. That, by the way, apart from a number of other causes, is why it will be more difficult for Western Europe to *start* a Socialist revolution than it was for us. To attempt to "circumvent" this difficulty by "skipping" the difficult job of utilizing reactionary parliaments for revolutionary purposes is absolutely childish. You want to create a new society, yet you fear the difficulties involved in forming a good parliamentary group, consisting of convinced, devoted, heroic Communists, in a reactionary parliament! Is that not childish? If Karl Liebknecht in Germany and Z. Höglund in Sweden were able, even without mass support from below, to set examples in the truly revolutionary utilization of reactionary parliaments, how can you say that a rapidly growing revolutionary, mass party, in the midst of the post-war disillusionment and exasperation of the masses at that, cannot *hammer out* a Communist group in the worst of parliaments? Just because the backward masses of the workers and—to an even greater degree—of the small peasants are in Western Europe much more imbued with bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices than they were in Russia, it is *only* from within such institutions as bourgeois parliaments that Communists can (and must) wage a long and persistent struggle, undaunted by difficulties, to expose, dissipate and overcome these prejudices.

The German "Lefts" complain about bad "leaders" in their party, give way to despair, and go to the absurd length of "repudiating" "leaders." But when conditions are such that it is often necessary to hide "leaders" underground, the *development* of good, reliable, experienced and authoritative "leaders" is a very difficult matter, and these difficulties *cannot* be successfully overcome without combining legal and illegal work, and *without testing the "leaders," among other ways*, in the parliamentary arena *as well*. Criticism—the keenest, most ruthless and uncompromising criticism—must be directed, not against parliamentarism or parliamentary activities, but against those leaders who are unable—and still more against those who are *unwilling*—to utilize parliamentary elections and the parliamentary tribune in a revolutionary, Communist manner. Only such criticism—combined, of course, with the expulsion of worthless leaders and their replacement by capable ones—will constitute useful and fruitful revolutionary work that will simultaneously train the "leaders" to be worthy of the working class and of the toiling

masses, and train the masses to be able properly to understand the political situation and the often very complicated and intricate tasks that spring from that situation.*

VIII
"NO COMPROMISES?"

In the quotation from the Frankfurt pamphlet we saw how emphatically the "Lefts" advance this slogan. It is sad to see people who doubtless consider themselves Marxists and want to be Marxists forgetting the fundamental truths of Marxism This is what Engels—who, like Marx, was one of those rarest of authors whose every sentence in every one of their great works contains remarkably profound meaning—wrote in 1874 in opposition to the manifesto of the thirty-three Blanquist Communards:

> "'We are Communists,' write the Blanquist Communards in their manifesto, 'because we want to attain our goal without stopping at intermediate stations, without any compromises, which only postpone the day of victory and prolong the period of slavery.'
> "The German Communists are Communists because through all the intermediate stations and all compromises, created, not by them, but by the course of historical development, they clearly perceive and constantly pursue the final aim, *viz.*, the abolition of classes and the creation of a society in which there will be no private ownership of land or of the means of production. The thirty three Blanquists are Communists because they imagine that merely because *they* want to skip the intermediate stations and compromises, that

* I have had very little opportunity to familiarize myself with "Left wing" Communism in Italy Comrade Bordiga and his faction of 'Communist Boycottists" (*Communista astensionista*), are certainly wrong in advocating non participation in parliament But on one point, it seems to me, Comrade Bordiga is right—as far as can be judged from two issues of his paper, *Il Soviet* (Nos 3 and 4, January 18 and February 1, 1920), from four issues of Comrade Serrati's excellent periodical, *Comunismo* (Nos 1 4, October 1 November 30, 1919), and from isolated numbers of Italian bourgeois papers which I have come across Comrade Bordiga and his faction are right in attacking Turati and his followers, who remain in a party which has recognized the Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, yet continue their former pernicious and opportunist policy as members of parliament Of course, in tolerating this, Comrade Serrati and the whole Italian Socialist Party are committing a mistake which threatens to do as much harm and give rise to the same dangers as it did in Hungary, where the Hungarian Turatis sabotaged both the Party and the Soviet government from within Such a mistaken, inconsistent, or spineless attitude towards the opportunist parliamentarians gives rise to "Left wing" Communism, on the one hand, and to a certain extent justifies its existence, on the other Comrade Serrati is obviously wrong when he accuses Deputy Turati of being "inconsistent" (*Comunismo*, No 3), for it is really the Italian Socialist Party itself that is inconsistent, since it tolerates such opportunist parliamentarians as Turati and Co

settles the matter, and if 'it begins' in the next few days—as has been definitely settled—and they once come to the helm, 'Communism will be introduced' the day after to-morrow. If that is not immediately possible, they are not Communists.

"What childish innocence it is to present impatience as a theoretically convincing argument!" (Fr. Engels, "Program of the Blanquist Communards," from the German Social-Democratic newspaper *Volksstaat*, 1874, No. 73, given in the Russian translation of *Articles, 1871-1875*, Petrograd, 1919, pp. 52-53.)

In the same article, Engels expresses his profound esteem for Vaillant, and speaks of the "undeniable merits" of the latter (who, like Guesde, was one of the most prominent leaders of international Socialism up to August 1914, when they both turned traitor to Socialism). But Engels does not allow an obvious mistake to pass without a detailed analysis. Of course, to very young and inexperienced revolutionaries, as well as to petty-bourgeois revolutionaries, of even a very respectable age and very experienced, it seems exceedingly "dangerous," incomprehensible and incorrect to "allow compromises." And many sophists (being unusually or excessively "experienced" politicians) reason exactly in the same way as the British leaders of opportunism mentioned by Comrade Lansbury: "If the Bolsheviks may make one compromise, why may we not make any kind of compromise?" But proletarians schooled in numerous strikes (to take only this manifestation of the class struggle) usually understand quite well the very profound (philosophical, historical, political and psychological) truth expounded by Engels. Every proletarian has been through strikes and has experienced "compromises" with the hated oppressors and exploiters, when the workers had to go back to work either without having achieved anything or consenting to only a partial satisfaction of their demands. Every proletarian—owing to the conditions of the mass struggle and the sharp intensification of class antagonisms in which he lives—notices the difference between a compromise enforced by objective conditions (such as lack of strike funds, no outside support, extreme hunger and exhaustion), a compromise which in no way diminishes the revolutionary devotion and readiness for further struggle on the part of the workers who have agreed to such a compromise, and a compromise by traitors who try to ascribe to outside causes their own selfishness (strikebreakers also effect "compromises"!), cowardice, desire to toady to the capitalists, and readiness to yield to intimidation, sometimes to persuasion, sometimes to sops, and sometimes to flattery on the part of the capitalists. (Such cases of traitors' compromises on the part of British trade union leaders are particularly plentiful in the history of the British labour movement, but, in one form or another, nearly all workers in all countries have witnessed the same sort of thing.)

Of course, there are individual cases of exceptional difficulty and

intricacy when it is possible to determine the real character of this or that "compromise" only with the greatest difficulty, just as there are cases of homicide where it is very difficult to decide whether the homicide was fully justified and even essential (as, for example, legitimate self defence), or due to unpardonable negligence, or even to a cunningly executed plan Of course, in politics, in which extremely complicated—national and international—relations between classes and parties have sometimes to be dealt with, very many cases will arise that will be much more difficult than a legitimate "compromise" during a strike, or the treacherous "compromise" of a strikebreaker, or of a traitor leader, etc It would be absurd to concoct a recipe or general rule ("No Compromises!") to serve all cases One must use one's own brains and analyse the situation in each separate case That, in fact, is one of the functions of a party organization and of party leaders worthy of the title, namely, through the prolonged, persistent, variegated and all round efforts of all thinking representatives of the given class,* to evolve the knowledge, the experience and—in addition to knowledge and experience—the political instinct necessary for the speedy and correct solution of intricate political problems

Naive and utterly inexperienced people imagine that it is sufficient to admit the permissibility of compromises *in general* in order to obliterate the dividing line between opportunism, against which we wage and must wage an irreconcilable struggle, and revolutionary Marxism, or Communism But if such people do not yet know that *all* dividing lines in nature and in society are mutable and to a certain extent conventional—they cannot be assisted otherwise than by a long process of training, education, enlightenment, and by political and everyday experience It is important to single out from the practical questions of the politics of each separate or specific historical moment those which reveal the principal type of impermissible, treacherous compromises, compromises embodying the opportunism that is fatal to the revolutionary class, and to exert all efforts to explain them and combat them During the imperialist war of 1914 18 between two groups of equally predatory and rapacious countries, the principal, fundamental type of opportunism was social chauvinism, that is, support of "defence of the fatherland," which, in *such* a war, was really equivalent to defence of the predatory interests of "one's own" bourgeoisie After the war, the defence of the robber "League of Nations," the defence of direct or indirect alliances

* Within every class even in the most enlightened countries, even within the most advanced class, and even when the circumstances of the moment have roused all its spiritual forces to an exceptional degree, there always are—and inevitably *will be* as long as classes exist as long as classless society has *not fully entrenched* and consolidated itself and has not developed on its own foundations—representatives of the class who do *not* think and are incapable of thinking Were this not so capitalism would not be the oppressor of the masses it is

with the bourgeoisie of one's own country against the revolutionary proletariat and the "Soviet" movement, and the defence of bourgeois democracy and bourgeois parliamentarism against the "Soviet power" became the principal manifestations of those impermissible and treacherous compromises, the sum total of which constituted the opportunism that is fatal to the revolutionary proletariat and its cause.

> ". . . One must emphatically reject all compromise with other parties . . . all policy of manoeuvring and compromise,"

write the German Lefts in the Frankfurt pamphlet.

It is a wonder that, holding such views, these Lefts do not emphatically condemn Bolshevism! For the German Lefts must know that the whole history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is *full* of instances of manoeuvring, temporizing and compromising with other parties, bourgeois parties included!

To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie, a war which is a hundred times more difficult, protracted and complicated than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between states, and to refuse beforehand to manoeuvre, to utilize the conflict of interests (even though temporary) among one's enemies, to refuse to temporize and compromise with possible (even though temporary, unstable, vacillating and conditional) allies—is not this ridiculous in the extreme? Is it not as though, when making a difficult ascent of an unexplored and hitherto inaccessible mountain, we were to refuse beforehand ever to move in zigzags, ever to retrace our steps, ever to abandon the course once selected and to try others? And yet we find people so immature and inexperienced (if youth were the explanation, it would not be so bad; young people are ordained by god himself to talk such nonsense for a period) meeting with the support—whether direct or indirect, open or covert, whole or partial, does not matter—of some members of the Communist Party of Holland!!

After the first Socialist revolution of the proletariat, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in one country, the proletariat of that country *for a long time* remains *weaker* than the bourgeoisie, simply because of the latter's extensive international connections, and also because of the spontaneous and continuous restoration and regeneration of capitalism and the bourgeoisie by the small commodity producers of the country which has overthrown the bourgeoisie. The more powerful enemy can be conquered only by exerting the utmost effort, and by *necessarily*, thoroughly, carefully, attentively and skilfully taking advantage of every, even the smallest, "rift" among the enemies, of every antagonism of interest among the bourgeoisie of the various countries and among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie within the various countries, and also by taking advantage of every, even the smallest, opportunity of gaining a mass ally, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable,

unreliable and conditional. Those who do not understand this do not understand even a particle of Marxism, or of scientific, modern Socialism *in general*. Those who have not proved by *deeds* over a fairly considerable period of time, and in fairly varied political situations, their ability to apply this truth in practice have not yet learned to assist the revolutionary class in its struggle for the emancipation of toiling humanity from the exploiters. And this applies equally to the period before and to the period after the conquest of political power by the proletariat

Our theory is not a dogma but a *guide to action*, said Marx and Engels, and it is the greatest mistake, the greatest crime on the part of such "patented" Marxists as Karl Kautsky, Otto Bauer, etc., that they have not understood this, have been unable to apply it at the most important moments of the proletarian revolution "Political activity is not the pavement of the Nevsky Prospect" (the clean, broad, smooth pavement of the perfectly straight principal street of St. Petersburg)—N.G. Chernyshevsky, the great Russian Socialist of the pre-Marxian period, used to say. Since Chernyshevsky's time Russian revolutionaries have paid very dearly for ignoring or forgetting this truth. We must strive at all costs to *prevent* the Left Communists and the West European and American revolutionaries who are devoted to the working class paying *as dearly* for the assimilation of this truth as the backward Russians did

Before the downfall of tsardom the Russian revolutionary Social-Democrats repeatedly utilized the services of the bourgeois liberals, that is, they concluded numerous practical compromises with them, and in 1901-02, even prior to the appearance of Bolshevism, the old editorial board of *Iskra* (consisting of Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich, Martov, Potresov and myself) concluded—not for long, it is true—a formal political alliance with Struve, the political leader of bourgeois liberalism, while it was able at the same time to carry on incessantly a most merciless ideological and political struggle against bourgeois liberalism and against the slightest manifestation of its influence in the working-class movement The Bolsheviks have always adhered to this policy Ever since 1905 they have systematically advocated an alliance between the working class and the peasantry against the liberal bourgeoisie and tsardom, never, however, refusing to support the bourgeoisie against tsardom (for instance, during second rounds of elections, or during second ballots) and never ceasing their relentless ideological and political struggle against the bourgeois revolutionary peasant party, the "Socialist-Revolutionaries," exposing them as petty-bourgeois democrats who falsely masqueraded as Socialists During the Duma elections in 1907, the Bolsheviks for a brief period entered into a formal political bloc with the "Socialist Revolutionaries" Between 1903 and 1912 there were periods of several years in which we were formally united with the Mensheviks in one Social Democratic Party, but we *never* ceased our ideological and political struggle against them on the grounds that they were oppor-

tunists and vehicles of bourgeois influence among the proletariat. During the war we effected certain compromises with the "Kautskyans," with the Left Mensheviks (Martov), and with a section of the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" (Chernov and Natanson); we were together with them at Zimmerwald and Kienthal and issued joint manifestos; but we *never* ceased and never relaxed our ideological political struggle against the "Kautskyans," Martov and Chernov (Natanson died in 1919 a "Revolutionary Communist" Narodnik who was very close to and almost in agreement with us). At the very moment of the October Revolution we entered into an informal but very important (and very successful) political bloc with the petty-bourgeois peasantry by adopting the *Socialist-Revolutionary* agrarian program *in its entirety*, without a single alteration—that is, we effected an unquestionable compromise in order to prove to the peasants that we did not want to "steam-roller" them, but to reach agreement with them. At the same time we proposed (and soon after effected) a formal political bloc, including participation in the government, with the "Left Socialist-Revolutionaries," who dissolved this bloc after the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace and then, in July 1918, went to the length of armed rebellion, and subsequently of armed warfare, against us.

It is therefore understandable why attacks of the German Lefts on the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany for entertaining the idea of a bloc with the "Independents" (the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the Kautskyans) seem to us to be utterly frivolous and a clear proof that the "Lefts" are in the *wrong*. We in Russia also had Right Mensheviks (who participated in the Kerensky Government), corresponding to the German Scheidemanns, and Left Mensheviks (Martov) who were in opposition to the Right Mensheviks and who corresponded to the German Kautskyans. A gradual shift of the masses of the workers from the Mensheviks to the Bolsheviks was to be clearly observed in 1917: at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets, held in June 1917, we had only 13 per cent of the votes; the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks had the majority. At the Second Congress of Soviets (October 25, 1917) we had 51 per cent of the votes. Why did not an absolutely *identical* trend of the workers from Right to Left in Germany immediately strengthen the Communists, but first strengthened the intermediate "Independent" Party, although this party never had independent political ideas or an independent policy, but only wavered between the Scheidemanns and the Communists?

Obviously, one of the reasons was the *mistaken* tactics of the German Communists, who must fearlessly and honestly admit this mistake and learn to rectify it. The mistake lay in their repudiation of the necessity of participating in the reactionary bourgeois parliaments and in the reactionary trade unions; the mistake lay in numerous manifestations of that "Left" infantile disorder which has now come to the surface and

will therefore be cured more thoroughly, more quickly and with greater benefit to the organism

The German "Independent Social Democratic Party" is obviously not homogeneous alongside the old opportunist leaders (Kautsky, Hilferding and, to a considerable extent, apparently, Crispien, Ledebour and others)—who have shown that they are unable to understand the significance of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, that they are unable to lead the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat—there has arisen in this party a Left, proletarian wing which is growing with remarkable rapidity Hundreds of thousands of members of this party (which has about three quarters of a million members, I think), are proletarians who are leaving Scheidemann and are rapidly going towards Communism This proletarian wing has already proposed—at the Leipzig (1919) Congress of the Independents—immediate and unconditional affiliation to the Third International To fear a "compromise" with this wing of the party is positively ridiculous On the contrary, it is *the duty* of the Communist to seek *and to find* a suitable form of compromise with them, such a compromise as, on the one hand, would facilitate and accelerate the necessary complete fusion with this wing and, on the other, would in no way hamper the Communists in their ideological and political struggle against the opportunist Right wing of the "Independents" It will probably not be easy to devise a suitable form of compromise—but only a charlatan could promise the German workers and German Communists an "easy" road to victory

Capitalism would not be capitalism if the "pure" proletariat were not surrounded by a large number of exceedingly mixed types intermediate between the proletarian and the semi proletarian (who earns his livelihood in part by the sale of his labour power), between the semi proletarian and the small peasant (and petty artisan, handicraft worker and small master in general), between the small peasant and the middle peasant, and so on, and if the proletariat itself were not divided into more developed and less developed strata, if it were not divided according to territorial origin, trade, sometimes according to religion, and so on And all this makes it necessary, absolutely necessary, for the vanguard of the proletariat, its class-conscious section, the Communist Party, to resort to manoeuvres, arrangements and compromises with the various groups of proletarians, with the various parties of the workers and small masters The whole point lies in *knowing how* to apply these tactics in such a way as to *raise*, and not lower, the *general* level of proletarian class consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and to conquer Incidentally, it should be noted that the victory of the Bolsheviks over the Mensheviks demanded the application of tactics of manoeuvres, arrangements and compromises, not only before *but also after* the October Revolution of 1917, but such manoeuvres and compromises, of course, as would assist, accelerate, consolidate and strengthen the Bolsheviks

at the expense of the Mensheviks. The petty-bourgeois democrats (including the Mensheviks) inevitably vacillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between bourgeois democracy and the Soviet system, between reform and revolution, between love-for-the-workers and fear of the proletarian dictatorship, etc. The proper tactics for the Communists to adopt is to *utilize* these vacillations, and not to ignore them; and utilizing them calls for concessions to those elements which are turning towards the proletariat—whenever and to the extent that they turn towards the proletariat—in addition to fighting those who turn towards the bourgeoisie. The result of the application of correct tactics in our country is that Menshevism has disintegrated, and is disintegrating more and more, that the stubbornly opportunist leaders are being isolated, and that the best of the workers and the best elements among the petty-bourgeois democrats are being brought into our camp. This is a long process, and the hasty "decision"—"No compromises, no manoeuvres!"—can only injure the work of strengthening the influence of the revolutionary proletariat and enlarging its forces.

Finally, one of the undoubted mistakes of the "Lefts" in Germany is their stubborn insistence on non-recognition of the Versailles Peace. The more "solidly" and "pompously," the more "emphatically" and dogmatically this viewpoint is formulated (by K. Horner, for instance), the less sensible does it appear. It is not enough to repudiate the preposterous absurdities of the "National Bolsheviks" (Lauffenberg and others), who have gone to the length of advocating a bloc with the German bourgeoisie for a war against the Entente, under the present conditions of the international proletarian revolution. One must understand that the tactics of not admitting that it would be essential for a Soviet Germany (if a German Soviet republic were to arise soon) to recognize the Versailles Peace for a time and to submit to it are fundamentally wrong. It does *not* follow from this that the "Independents"—at a time when the Scheidemanns were in the government, when the Soviet government in Hungary had not yet been overthrown, and when the possibility of a Soviet revolution in Vienna supporting Soviet Hungary was not yet precluded—were right in putting forward, *under those circumstances*, the demand that the Versailles Peace be signed. At that time the "Independents" tacked and manoeuvred very clumsily, for they more or less accepted responsibility for the Scheidemann traitors and more or less sank from the level of advocating a merciless (and most cold-blooded) class war against the Scheidemanns to the level of advocating a "classless" or "above-class" standpoint.

But the position is now obviously such that the German Communists should not tie their hands and promise positively and without fail to repudiate the Versailles Peace in the event of the victory of Communism. That would be foolish. They must say: The Scheidemanns and the Kautskyans have perpetrated a number of acts of treachery which hindered (and

in part directly ruined) the chances of an alliance with Soviet Russia and Soviet Hungary. We Communists will do all we can to *facilitate* and *pave the way* for such an alliance; at the same time we are by no means obliged to repudiate the Versailles Peace, come what may, and, moreover, immediately. The possibility of repudiating it with success will depend not only on the German, but also on the international successes of the Soviet movement. The Scheidemanns and Kautskyans hampered this movement, we shall further it. That is the substance of the matter, that is where the fundamental difference lies. And if our class enemies, the exploiters and their lackeys, the Scheidemanns and Kautskyans, have missed a number of opportunities of strengthening both the German and the international Soviet movement, of strengthening both the German and the international Soviet revolution, they are to blame The Soviet revolution in Germany will strengthen the international Soviet movement, which is the strongest bulwark (and the only reliable, invincible and world wide bulwark) against the Versailles Peace and against international imperialism in general. To give prime place absolutely, unconditionally and immediately to liberation from the Versailles Peace, to give it *precedence over the question* of liberating other countries oppressed by imperialism from the yoke of imperialism, is petty-bourgeois nationalism (worthy of Kautsky, Hilferding, Otto Bauer and Co) and not revolutionary internationalism The overthrow of the bourgeoisie in any of the large European countries, including Germany, would be such a gain to the international revolution that for its sake one can, and if necessary should, tolerate a *more prolonged existence of the Versailles Peace*. If Russia, by herself, could endure the Brest-Litovsk Peace for several months to the advantage of the revolution, there is nothing impossible in a Soviet Germany, allied with Soviet Russia, enduring the existence of the Versailles Peace for an even longer period to the advantage of the revolution

The imperialists of France, England, etc , are trying to provoke the German Communists and to lay a trap for them "Say that you will not sign the Versailles Peace!" And the Left Communists childishly fall into the trap laid for them, instead of skilfully manoeuvring against the crafty and, *at the present moment*, stronger, enemy, and instead of telling him "Now we would sign the Versailles Peace " To tie our hands beforehand, openly to tell the enemy, who is at present better armed than we are, whether we shall fight him, and when, is stupidity and not revolutionariness To accept battle at a time when it is obviously advantageous to the enemy and not to us is a crime, and anybody who is unable to "tack, manoeuvre, and compromise" in order to avoid an obviously disadvantageous battle is absolutely worthless as a political leader of the revolutionary class

IX

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM IN GREAT BRITAIN

There is no Communist Party in Great Britain yet, but there is a fresh, broad, powerful and rapidly growing Communist movement among the workers which justifies the brightest hopes. There are several political parties and organizations (the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales Socialist Society, the Workers' Socialist Federation) which desire to form a Communist Party and are already negotiating among themselves to this end. *The Workers' Dreadnought*, the weekly organ of the last of the organizations mentioned, in its issue of February 21, 1920, Vol. VI, No. 48, contains an article by the editor, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, entitled "Towards a Communist Party." In this article she outlines the progress of the negotiations between the four organizations mentioned for the formation of a united Communist Party, on the basis of affiliation to the Third International, the recognition of the Soviet system instead of parliamentarism, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It appears that one of the greatest obstacles to the immediate formation of a united Communist Party is the disagreement over the question of parliamentary action and over the question whether the new Communist Party should affiliate to the old, trade unionist, opportunist and social-chauvinist Labour Party, which consists mostly of trade unions. The Workers' Socialist Federation and the Socialist Labour Party* are opposed to taking part in parliamentary elections and in parliament, and they are opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party; and in this they disagree with all, or with the majority, of the members of the British Socialist Party, which they regard as the "Right wing of the Communist Parties" in Great Britain. (Page 5, Sylvia Pankhurst's article.)

Thus, the main division is the same as in Germany, notwithstanding the enormous difference in the form in which the disagreements manifest themselves (in Germany the form is more analogous to the "Russian" than it is in Great Britain) and in a number of other things. Let us examine the arguments of the "Lefts."

On the question of parliamentary action, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst refers to an article in the same issue by Comrade W. Gallacher, who writes in the name of the Scottish Workers' Council in Glasgow.

> "The above council," he says, "is definitely anti-parliamentarian, and has behind it the Left wing of the various political bodies.
>
> "We represent the revolutionary movement in Scotland, striving continually to build up a revolutionary organization within the industries, and a Communist Party, based on social committees, throughout the country. For a considerable time we have been

* I believe this party is opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party but not all its members are opposed to parliamentary action.

sparring with the official parliamentarians We have not considered it necessary to declare open warfare on them, *and they are afraid* to open attacks on us

"But this state of affairs cannot long continue We are winning all along the line

"The rank and file of the I L P in Scotland is becoming more and more disgusted with the thought of Parliament, and Soviets [the Russian word transliterated into English is used] or workers' councils are being supported by almost every branch

"This is very serious, of course, for the gentlemen who look to politics for a profession, and they are using any and every means to persuade their members to come back into the parliamentary fold

"Revolutionary comrades *must not* [all italics are by the author] give any support to this gang Our fight here is going to be a difficult one One of the worst features of it will be the treachery of those whose personal ambition is a more impelling force than their regard for the revolution

"Any support given to parliamentarism is simply assisting to put power into the hands of our British Scheidemanns and Noskes Henderson, Clynes and Co are hopelessly reactionary The official I L P is more and more coming under the control of middle class Liberals, who, since the rout of the Liberal Party, have found their spiritual home in the camp of Messrs MacDonald, Snowden and Co The official I L P is bitterly hostile to the Third International, the rank and file is for it Any support to the parliamentary opportunists is simply playing into the hands of the former

"The B S P doesn't count at all here What is wanted here is a sound, revolutionary, industrial organization and Communist Party, working along clear, well defined, scientific lines If our comrades can assist us in building these, we will take their help gladly, if they cannot, for God's sake let them keep out altogether, lest they betray the revolution by lending[1] their support to the reactionaries, who are so eagerly clamouring for parliamentary honours (?) [the query mark is the author's] and who are anxious to prove they *can rule* as effectively as the boss class politicians themselves "

In my opinion this letter excellently expresses the temper and point of view of the young Communists, or of rank and file workers who are only just coming to Communism This temper is very gratifying and valuable we must learn to prize it and to support it, for without it, it would be hopeless to expect the victory of the proletarian revolution in Great Britain, or in any other country for that matter People who can give expression to this temper of the masses, who can rouse such a temper (which is

very often dormant, unrealized and unroused) among the masses, must be prized and every assistance must be given them. At the same time we must openly and frankly tell them that temper *alone* is not enough to lead the masses in the great revolutionary struggle, and that some mistakes that very loyal adherents of the cause of the revolution are about to commit, or are committing, may damage the cause of the revolution. Comrade Gallacher's letter undoubtedly betrays the germs of *all* the mistakes that are being committed by the German "Left" Communists and that were committed by the Russian "Left" Bolsheviks in 1908 and 1918.

The writer of the letter is imbued with a noble, proletarian hatred for the bourgeois "class politicians" (a hatred understood and appreciated, however, not only by the proletarian but by all who labour, by all "small folk," to use a German expression). This hatred of a representative of the oppressed and exploited masses is verily the "beginning of all wisdom," the basis of every Socialist and Communist movement and of its success. But the writer apparently does not appreciate that politics is a science and an art that does not drop from the skies, that it is not obtained gratis, and that if the proletariat wants to conquer the bourgeoisie it must train *its own*, proletarian "class politicians," and such as will be no worse than the bourgeois politicians.

The writer of the letter fully understands that only workers' Soviets, and not parliament, can be the instrument whereby the aims of the proletariat will be achieved. And, of course, those who have failed to understand this up to now are hopeless reactionaries, even if they are most highly educated people, most experienced politicians, most sincere Socialists, most erudite Marxists, and most honest citizens and fathers of families. But the writer of the letter does not even ask, it does not occur to him to ask, whether it is possible to bring about the victory of the Soviets over parliament without getting "pro-Soviet" politicians *into* parliament, without disrupting parliamentarism from *within*, without working within parliament for the success of the Soviets in their forthcoming task of dispersing parliament. And yet the writer of the letter expresses the absolutely correct idea that the Communist Party in Great Britain must act on *scientific* principles. Science demands, firstly, that the experience of other countries should be taken into account, especially if these other, also capitalist, countries are undergoing, or have recently undergone, a very similar experience; secondly, it demands that account should be taken of *all* the forces, groups, parties, classes and masses operating in the given country, and that policy should not be determined only by the desires and views, by the degree of class consciousness and the readiness for battle of only one group or party.

It is true that the Hendersons, the Clynes, the MacDonalds and the Snowdens are hopelessly reactionary. It is equally true that they want to get the power into their own hands (although they prefer a coalition with the bourgeoisie), that they want to "rule" on the old bourgeois lines, and that

when they do get into power they will infallibly behave like the Scheidemanns and Noskes All that is true. But it by no means follows that to support them is treachery to the revolution, but rather that the working class revolutionaries should, in the interests of the revolution, give these gentlemen a certain amount of parliamentary support To make this idea clear I shall take two contemporary British political documents 1) the speech delivered by the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, on March 18, 1920 (reported in the *Manchester Guardian* of March 19, 1920) and 2) the arguments of a "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, in the article mentioned above.

Arguing against Asquith (who was especially invited to this meeting but declined to attend) and against those liberals who do not want a coalition with the Conservatives but closer relations with the Labour Party (Comrade Gallacher, in his letter, also points to the fact that Liberals are joining the Independent Labour Party), Lloyd George said that a coalition, and a *close* coalition at that, between the Liberals and Conservatives was essential, otherwise there might be a victory for the Labour Party, which Lloyd George "prefers to call" the Socialist Party and which is striving for the "collective ownership" of the means of production "In France this is called Communism," the leader of the British bourgeoisie said, putting it popularly for his auditors, the Liberal members of Parliament, who probably had not known it before, "in Germany it is called Socialism, and in Russia it is called Bolshevism" This is opposed to Liberal principles, explained Lloyd George, because Liberalism stands in principle for private property "Civilization is in danger," declared the speaker, and, therefore, the Liberals and the Conservatives must unite ...

> " If you go to the agricultural areas," said Lloyd George, "I agree that you have the old party divisions as strong as ever, they are far removed from the danger It does not walk their lanes But when they see it, they will be as strong as some of those industrial constituencies now are Four fifths of this country is industrial and commercial, hardly one fifth is agricultural It is one of the things I have constantly in my mind when I think of the dangers of the future here In France the population is agricultural, and you have a solid body of opinion which does not move very rapidly, and which is not very easily excited by revolutionary movements That is not the case here This country is more top heavy than any country in the world, and if it begins to rock, the crash here, for that reason, will be greater than in any land"

From this the reader will see that Mr Lloyd George is not only a very clever man, but that he has also learned a great deal from the Marxists It would be no sin for us to learn something from Lloyd George

It is interesting to note the following episode which occurred in the course of the discussion that followed Lloyd George's speech:

> "*Mr. Wallace, M. P.*: I should like to ask what the Prime Minister considers the effect might be in the industrial constituencies upon the industrial workers, so many of whom are Liberals at the present time and from whom we get so much support. Would not a possible result be to cause an immediate overwhelming accession of strength to the Labour Party from men who are at present our cordial supporters?
>
> "*The Prime Minister*: I take a totally different view. The fact that Liberals are fighting among themselves undoubtedly drives a considerable number of Liberals in despair to the Labour Party, where you get a considerable body of Liberals, very able men, whose business it is to discredit the Government. The result is undoubtedly to bring a good accession of public sentiment to the Labour Party. It does not go to the Liberals who are outside, it goes to the Labour Party, the by-elections show that."

I would like to say in passing that this argument shows especially how muddled even the cleverest members of the bourgeoisie have become and how they cannot help committing irreparable stupidities. That in fact will cause the downfall of the bourgeoisie. But our people may commit stupidities (provided, of course, that they are not too serious and are rectified in time) and yet in the long run come out the victors.

The second political document is the following argument advanced by a "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst:

> ". . . Comrade Inkpin [the General Secretary of the British Socialist Party] refers to the Labour Party as the main body of the working-class movement. Another comrade of the British Socialist Party, at the conference of the Third International just held, put the British Socialist Party view more strongly. He said: 'We regard the Labour Party as the organized working class.'
>
> "But we do not take this view of the Labour Party. The Labour Party is very large numerically, though its membership is to a great extent quiescent and apathetic, consisting of many workers who have joined the trade unions because their workmates are trade unionists, and to share the friendly benefits.
>
> "But we recognize that the great size of the Labour Party is also due to the fact that it is the creation of a school of thought beyond which the majority of the British working class has not yet emerged, though great changes are at work in the mind of the people which will presently alter this state of affairs. . . ."

'The British Labour Party, like the social patriotic organizations of other countries, will, in the natural development of society, inevitably come into power It is for the Communists to build up the forces which will overthrow the social patriots, and in this country we must not delay or falter in that work

"We must not dissipate our energy in adding to the strength of the Labour Party, its rise to power is inevitable We must concentrate on making a Communist movement that will vanquish it

"The Labour Party will soon be forming a government, the revolutionary opposition must make ready to attack it "

Thus the Liberal bourgeoisie is abandoning the historical system of "two parties" (of exploiters) which has been hallowed by age long experience and which has been extremely advantageous to the exploiters, and considers it necessary to unite their forces to fight the Labour Party A number of the Liberals are deserting to the Labour Party like rats from a sinking ship The Left Communists believe that the rise of the Labour Party to power is inevitable and they admit that at present it has the support of the majority of the workers From this they draw the strange conclusion which Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst formulates as follows

'The Communist Party must not enter into compromises The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of reformism inviolate, its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the Communist revolution "

On the contrary, if the majority of the workers in Great Britain still follow the lead of the British Kerenskys or Scheidemanns and have not yet had the experience of a government composed of these people, which experience was required in Russia and Germany to secure the mass passage of the workers to Communism, what undoubtedly follows is that the British Communists *should* participate in parliamentary action, that they should, from *within* Parliament, help the masses of the workers to see the results of a Henderson and Snowden government in practice, that they should help the Hendersons and Snowdens to defeat Lloyd George and Churchill combined To act otherwise would mean placing difficulties in the way of the revolution, for revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses, and never by propaganda alone "To lead the way without compromises, without stopping or turning"—if this is said by an obviously impotent minority of the workers who know (or at all events should know) that if Henderson and Snowden gain the victory over Lloyd George and Churchill, the majority will very soon become disappointed in their leaders and will begin to support Communism (or at all events

will adopt an attitude of neutrality, and for the most part of benevolent neutrality, towards the Communists), then this slogan is obviously mistaken. It is just as if 10,000 soldiers were to fling themselves into battle against 50,000 enemy soldiers, when it would have been wiser to "stop," to "turn," or even to effect a "compromise" pending the arrival of the 100,000 reinforcements which were on their way but which could not go into action immediately. That is intellectual childishness and not the serious tactics of a revolutionary class.

The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: it is not enough for revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes, it is essential for revolution that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the *"lower classes" do not want* the old way, and when the "upper classes" *cannot carry on in the old way*—only then can revolution triumph. This truth may be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). It follows that for revolution it is essential, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking, politically active workers) should fully understand that revolution is necessary and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes should be passing through a government crisis, which draws even the most backward masses into politics (a symptom of every real revolution is a rapid, tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the number of members of the toiling and oppressed masses—hitherto apathetic—who are capable of waging the political struggle), weakens the government and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly.

In Great Britain, as can be seen from Lloyd George's speech, incidentally, both conditions for a successful proletarian revolution are clearly ripening. And the mistakes of the Left Communists are particularly dangerous at the present time precisely because certain revolutionaries are not displaying a sufficiently thoughtful, attentive, intelligent and shrewd interest in each of these conditions. If we are the party of the revolutionary *class*, and not a revolutionary group, if we want the *masses* to follow us (and unless we do, we stand the risk of remaining mere windbags), we must, firstly, help Henderson or Snowden to beat Lloyd George and Churchill (or, rather, compel the former to beat the latter, because the former *are afraid of their victory*!); secondly, we must help the majority of the working class to convince themselves by their own experience that we are right, that is, that the Hendersons and Snowdens are utterly worthless, that they are petty bourgeois and treacherous by nature, and that their bankruptcy is inevitable; thirdly, we must bring nearer the moment when, *on the basis* of the disappointment of

the majority of the workers in the Hendersons, it will be possible with serious chances of success to overthrow the government of the Hendersons at once, because if that most clever and solid big bourgeois, not petty bourgeois, Lloyd George, is betraying utter consternation and is more and more weakening himself (and the bourgeoisie as a whole) by his "friction" with Churchill one day and his "friction" with Asquith the next, how much greater will be the consternation of a Henderson government!

I will put it more concretely In my opinion, the British Communists should unite their four (all very weak, and some very, very weak) parties and groups to form a single Communist Party on the basis of the principles of the Third International and of *obligatory* participation in Parliament The Communist Party should propose a "compromise" to the Hendersons and Snowdens, an election agreement let us fight the alliance of Lloyd George and the Conservatives hand in hand, let us divide the parliamentary seats in proportion to the number of votes cast by the workers for the Labour Party and for the Communist Party (not at the elections, but in a special vote), and let us retain *complete liberty* of agitation, propaganda and political activity Without the latter condition, of course, no such bloc can be concluded, for it would be treachery, the British Communists must absolutely insist on and secure complete liberty to expose the Hendersons and the Snowdens in the same way as (*for fifteen years*, 1903 17) the Russian Bolsheviks insisted on and secured it in relation to the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, *i e*, the Mensheviks

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens consent to a bloc on these terms, we shall be the gainers, because the number of parliamentary seats is of no importance to us, we are not out for seats, we can yield on this point (the Hendersons, on the other hand, and particularly their new friends—or new masters—the Liberals who have joined the Independent Labour Party are most anxious to get seats) We shall be the gainers, because we shall carry *our* agitation among the *masses* at a time when Lloyd George *himself* has "incensed" them, and we shall not only help the Labour Party to establish its government more quickly, but also help the masses to understand more quickly the Communist propaganda that we shall carry on against the Hendersons without any curtailment or omission

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with us on these terms we shall gain still more, for we shall have at once shown the *masses* (note that even in the purely Menshevik and utterly opportunist Independent Labour Party the *masses* are pro Soviet) that the Hendersons prefer *their* close relations with the capitalists to the unity of all the workers We shall immediately gain in the eyes of the *masses*, who, particularly after the brilliant, highly correct and highly useful (for Communism) explanations given by Lloyd George, will sympathize with

the idea of uniting all the workers against the Lloyd George-Conservative alliance. We shall gain immediately because we shall have demonstrated to the masses that the Hendersons and the Snowdens are afraid to beat Lloyd George, are afraid to take power alone, and are striving *secretly* to get the support of Lloyd George, who is *openly* stretching out a hand to the Conservatives against the Labour Party. It should be noted that in Russia, after the Revolution of February 27, 1917 (old style), the propaganda of the Bolsheviks against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (*i.e.*, the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens) benefited precisely because of a circumstance of this kind. We said to the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries: take over the entire power without the bourgeoisie, because you have the majority in the Soviets (at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets, held in June 1917, the Bolsheviks had only 13 per cent of the votes). But the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens feared to take power without the bourgeoisie, and when the bourgeoisie delayed the elections to the Constituent Assembly, knowing perfectly well that the majority in it would go to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks* (who had a close political bloc and actually represented *one and the same* petty-bourgeois democracy), the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were unable energetically and consistently to oppose these delays.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with the Communists, the Communists will gain immediately as regards winning the sympathy of the masses and discrediting the Hendersons and Snowdens; and if as a result we do lose a few parliamentary seats, it is a matter of no importance to us. We would put up our candidates in a very few but absolutely safe constituencies, namely, constituencies where putting up our candidate would not give the seat to the Liberal and lose it for the Labour candidate. We would take part in the election campaign, distribute leaflets advocating Communism, and, in *all* constituencies where we have no candidates, we would urge the electors *to vote for the Labour candidate and against the bourgeois candidate*. Comrades Sylvia Pankhurst and Gallacher are mistaken in thinking that this is a betrayal of Communism, or a renunciation of the struggle against the social traitors. On the contrary, the Communist revolution undoubtedly stands to gain by it.

The British Communists very often find it hard at present to approach the masses and even to get a hearing from them. If I come out as a Communist and call upon the workers to vote for Henderson against Lloyd George, they will certainly give me a hearing. And I will be able to explain in a

* The results of the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia in November 1917 were as follows (based on returns embracing over 36,000,000 voters): the Bolsheviks obtained 25 per cent of the votes; the various parties of the landlords and bourgeoisie obtained 13 per cent and the petty-bourgeois democratic parties, *i.e.*, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and a number of small kindred groups, obtained 62 per cent.

popular manner not only why Soviets are better than parliament and why the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the dictatorship of Churchill (disguised by the signboard of bourgeois "democracy"), but also that I want with my vote to support Henderson in the same way as the rope supports a hanged man—that the impending establishment of a government of Hendersons will prove that I am right, will bring the masses over to my side, and will accelerate the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdens just as was the case with their *confrères* in Russia and Germany

And if the objection is raised that these tactics are too "subtle," or too complicated, that the masses will not understand them, that they will split and scatter our forces, will prevent us concentrating them on the Soviet revolution, etc , I will reply to the "Lefts" who raise this objection don't ascribe your dogmatism to the masses! The masses in Russia are probably no better educated than the masses in England, if anything, they are less so Yet the masses understood the Bolsheviks, and the fact that *on the eve* of the Soviet revolution, in September 1917, the Bolsheviks put up their candidates for a bourgeois parliament (the Constituent Assembly) and *on the morrow* of the Soviet revolution, in November 1917, took part in the elections to this Constituent Assembly, which they dispersed on January 5, 1918, did not hamper the Bolsheviks, but on the contrary, helped them

I cannot deal here with the second point of disagreement among the British Communists, *viz* , the question of affiliating to the Labour Party I have too little material at my disposal on this question, which is a particularly complex one in view of the quite unique character of the British Labour Party, the very structure of which is so unlike the political parties common to the Continent It is beyond doubt, however, first, that on this question, too, those who try to deduce the tactics of the revolutionary proletariat from principles like ' The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of reformism inviolate, its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the Communist revolution '—will inevitably fall into error For such principles are merely a repetition of the mistakes committed by the French Blanquist Communards, who, in 1874, "repudiated" all compromises and all intermediate stations Secondly, it is beyond doubt that in this question too, as always, the task is to learn to apply the general and basic principles of Communism to the *peculiar* relations between classes and parties, to the *peculiar features* of the objective development towards Communism which are characteristic of each country and which must be studied, discovered, divined

But this must be discussed not in connection with British Communism alone, but in connection with the general conclusions concerning the development of Communism in all capitalist countries We shall now proceed to deal with this theme

X

SOME CONCLUSIONS

The Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905 revealed a very peculiar turn of affairs in world history: in one of the most backward capitalist countries the strike movement attained a breadth and power without precedent anywhere in the world. In the *first month of 1905 alone* the number of strikers was over ten times the *annual* average for the previous ten years (1895-1904); and from January to October 1905 strikes grew continuously and reached enormous dimensions. Under the influence of a number of entirely unique historical conditions, backward Russia was the first to show the world not only a sudden leap in the growth of the independent activity of the oppressed masses in time of revolution (this has happened in all great revolutions), but also a significance of the proletariat infinitely exceeding the numerical ratio of the latter to the total population, a combination of the economic strike and the political strike, the transformation of the latter into armed uprising, and the birth of a new form of mass struggle and mass organization of the classes oppressed by capitalism, *viz.*, the Soviets.

The revolutions of February and October 1917 led to the all-round development of the Soviets on a national scale, and to their victory in the proletarian, Socialist revolution. And in less than two years there became revealed the international character of the Soviets, the spread of this form of struggle and organization to the world working-class movement, and the historical mission of the Soviets as the grave-digger, heir and successor of bourgeois parliamentarism, and of bourgeois democracy in general.

More than that, the history of the working-class movement now shows that in all countries it is about to experience (and has already begun to experience) a struggle between Communism, which is growing, gaining strength and marching towards victory, and, first and foremost, its *own* (in each country) "Menshevism," *i.e.*, opportunism and social chauvinism, and, secondly—as a sort of supplement—"Left-wing" Communism. The former struggle has developed in all countries, apparently without a single exception, as a struggle between the Second International (already virtually dead) and the Third International. The latter struggle can be observed in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, America (at least, a certain *section* of the Industrial Workers of the World and the anarcho-syndicalist trends uphold the errors of Left-wing Communism side by side with an almost complete and unreserved acceptance of the Soviet system) and France (the attitude of a section of the former syndicalists towards a political party and parliamentarism, again side by side with the acceptance of the Soviet system), in other words, the struggle is undoubtedly being waged not only on an international but even on a world-wide scale.

But while the working-class movement is everywhere passing through what is actually the same kind of preparatory school for victory over the

bourgeoisie, it is in each country achieving this development in *its own way.* The big, advanced capitalist countries are marching along this road *much more rapidly* than did Bolshevism, which history granted fifteen years to prepare itself, as an organized political trend, for victory. In the short space of one year, the Third International has already scored a decisive victory; it has defeated the Second, yellow, social-chauvinist International, which only a few months ago was incomparably stronger than the Third International, seemed to be stable and strong and enjoyed the all-round support—direct and indirect, material (Cabinet posts, passports, the press) and ideological—of the world bourgeoisie.

The whole point now is that the Communists of every country should quite consciously take into account both the main fundamental tasks of the struggle against opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism and the *specific features* which this struggle assumes and inevitably must assume in each separate country in conformity with the peculiar features of its economics, politics, culture, national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, etc. Everywhere we observe that dissatisfaction with the Second International is spreading and growing, both because of its opportunism and because of its inability, or incapacity, to create a really centralized, a really leading centre that would be capable of directing the international tactics of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for a world Soviet republic. We must clearly realize that such a leading centre cannot under any circumstances be built up on stereotyped, mechanically equalized and identical tactical rules of struggle. As long as national and state differences exist among peoples and countries—and these differences will continue to exist for a very long time even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world scale—the unity of international tactics of the Communist working-class movement of all countries demands, not the elimination of variety, not the abolition of national differences (that is a foolish dream at the present moment), but such an application of the *fundamental* principles of Communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) as will *correctly modify* these principles in *certain particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national state differences. The main task of the historical period through which all the advanced countries (and not only the advanced countries) are now passing is to investigate, study, seek, divine, grasp that which is peculiarly national, specifically national in the *concrete manner* in which each country *approaches* the fulfilment of the *single* international task, the victory over opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism within the working-class movement, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship. The main thing—not everything by a very long way, of course, but the main thing—has already been achieved in that the vanguard of the working class has been won over, in that it has ranged itself on the side of Soviet government against parliamentarism, on the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat against bourgeois democracy.

Now all efforts, all attention, must be concentrated on the *next* step—which seems, and from a certain standpoint really is, less fundamental, but which, on the other hand, is actually closer to the practical carrying out of the task—namely, on seeking the forms of *transition* or *approach* to the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian vanguard has been ideologically won over. That is the main thing. Without it not even the first step towards victory can be made. But it is still a fairly long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with the vanguard alone. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it, and one in which they cannot possibly support the enemy, would be not merely folly but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of toilers and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not enough. For this the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, now confirmed with astonishing force and vividness not only in Russia but also in Germany. Not only the uncultured, often illiterate masses of Russia, but the highly cultured, entirely literate masses of Germany had to realize through their own painful experience the absolute impotence and spinelessness, the absolute helplessness and servility to the bourgeoisie, the utter vileness of the government of the knights of the Second International, the absolute inevitability of a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia, Kapp and Co. in Germany) as the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to turn them resolutely toward Communism.

The immediate task that confronts the class-conscious vanguard of the international labour movement, *i.e.*, the Communist Parties, groups and trends, is to be able *to lead* the broad masses (now, for the most part, slumbering, apathetic, hidebound, inert and dormant) to their new position, or, rather, to be able to lead *not only* their own party, but also these masses, in their approach, their transition to the new position. While the first historical task (*viz.*, that of winning over the class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat to Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class) could not be accomplished without a complete ideological and political victory over opportunism and social chauvinism, the second task, which now becomes the immediate task, and which consists in being able to lead *the masses* to the new position that can ensure the victory of the vanguard in the revolution, this immediate task cannot be accomplished without the elimination of Left doctrinairism, without completely overcoming and getting rid of its mistakes.

As long as the question was (and in so far as it still is) one of winning over the vanguard of the proletariat to Communism, so long, and to that extent, propaganda took first place; even propaganda circles, with all

the imperfections of the circles, are useful under these conditions and produce fruitful results But when it is a question of the practical action of the masses, of the disposition, if one may so express it, of vast armies, of the alignment of *all* the class forces of the given society *for the final and decisive battle,* then propaganda habits alone, the mere repetition of the truths of "pure" Communism, are of no avail In these circumstances one must not count in hundreds, as the propagandist who belongs to a small group that has not yet led masses really does, in these circumstances one must count in millions and tens of millions In these circumstances we must not only ask ourselves whether we have convinced the vanguard of the revolutionary class, but also whether the historically effective forces of *all* classes—positively of all the classes of the given society without exception—are aligned in such a way that everything is ripe for the decisive battle, in such a way that 1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength, that 2) all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy, and that 3) among the proletariat a mass sentiment in favour of supporting the most determined, supremely bold, revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has arisen and begun vigorously to grow Then revolution is indeed ripe, then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated and briefly outlined above, and if we have chosen the moment rightly, our victory is assured

The divergences between the Churchills and the Lloyd Georges—with insignificant national differences these political types exist in *all* countries—on the one hand, and between the Hendersons and the Lloyd Georges on the other, are quite minor and unimportant from the standpoint of pure, *i e*, abstract Communism, *i e*, Communism that has not yet matured to the stage of practical, mass, political action But from the standpoint of this practical mass action, these differences are very, very important The whole business, the whole task of the Communist who wants to be not merely a class conscious and convinced propagandist of ideas, but a practical leader of the *masses* in the revolution, is to take these differences into account, to determine the moment when the inevitable conflicts between these "friends" which weaken and enfeeble *all the "friends" taken together* will have completely matured The strictest loyalty to the ideas of Communism must be combined with the ability to make all the necessary practical compromises, to manoeuvre, to make agreements, zigzags, retreats and so on, in order to accelerate the coming to power and subsequent loss of political power of the Hendersons (the heroes of the Second International, if we are not to mention the names

of individuals; the representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy who call themselves Socialists); to accelerate their inevitable bankruptcy in practice, which will enlighten the masses in the spirit of our ideas, in the direction of Communism; to accelerate the inevitable friction, quarrels, conflicts and utter discord between the Hendersons, the Lloyd Georges and the Churchills (the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Constitutional-Democrats and the monarchists; the Scheidemanns, the bourgeoisie and the Kappists, etc.); and to select the proper moment when the discord among these "pillars of the sacred right of private property" is at its height, in order, by a determined attack of the proletariat, to defeat them all and capture political power.

History generally, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more many-sided, more lively and "subtle" than even the best parties and the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes imagine. This is understandable, because even the best vanguards express the class consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of thousands; whereas revolutions are made, at moments of particular upsurge and the exertion of all human capacities, by the class consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of millions, spurred on by a most acute struggle of classes. From this follow two very important practical conclusions: first, that in order to fulfil its task the revolutionary class must be able to master *all* forms, *or sides, of social activity without exception (completing, after the capture* of political power, sometimes at great risk and very great danger, what it did not complete before the capture of power); second, that the revolutionary class must be ready to pass from one form to another in the quickest and most unexpected manner.

Everyone will agree that an army which does not train itself to wield all arms, all the means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses or may possess, behaves in an unwise or even in a criminal manner. But this applies to politics even more than it does to war. In politics it is even harder to forecast what methods of warfare will be applicable and useful to us under certain future conditions. Unless we master all means of warfare, we may suffer grave and even decisive defeat if changes in the position of the other classes that do not depend on us bring to the forefront forms of activity in which we are particularly weak. If, however, we master all means of warfare, we shall certainly be victorious, because we represent the interests of the really foremost and really revolutionary class, even if circumstances do not permit us to use the weapons that are most dangerous to the enemy, weapons that are most swift in dealing mortal blows. Inexperienced revolutionaries often think that legal methods of struggle are opportunist because in this field the bourgeoisie has most frequently (especially in "peaceful," non-revolutionary times) deceived and fooled the workers, and that illegal methods of struggle are revolutionary. But that is not true. What is true is that those parties and lead-

ers are opportunists and traitors to the working class who are unable or unwilling (don't say you cannot, say you won't!) to adopt illegal methods of struggle in conditions such as those which prevailed, for example, during the imperialist war of 1914-18, when the bourgeoisie of the freest democratic countries deceived the workers in the most insolent and brutal manner, forbidding the truth to be told about the predatory character of the war. But revolutionaries who are unable to combine illegal forms of struggle with *every* form of legal struggle are poor revolutionaries indeed. It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when the revolution has already flared up and is at its height, when everybody is joining the revolution just because they are carried away, because it is the fashion, and sometimes even from careerist motives. After its victory, the proletariat has to make most strenuous efforts, to suffer the pains of martyrdom, one might say, to "liberate" itself from such pseudo-revolutionaries. It is far more difficult—and far more useful—to be a revolutionary when the conditions for direct, open, really mass and really revolutionary struggle *do not yet exist*, to defend the interests of the revolution (by propaganda, agitation and organization) in non-revolutionary bodies and often even in downright reactionary bodies, in non-revolutionary circumstances, among masses who are incapable of immediately appreciating the need for revolutionary methods of action. The main task of Communism in Western Europe and America today is to learn to discover, to probe for, to correctly determine the specific path or the particular turn of events that will *lead* the masses to the real, last, decisive, and great revolutionary struggle.

Take England, for example. We cannot tell, and no one can tell beforehand, how soon the real proletarian revolution will flare up there, and *what immediate cause* will most serve to rouse, kindle, and impel into the struggle the very wide masses who are at present dormant. Hence, it is our duty to carry on our preparatory work in such a way, as to be "well shod on all four feet" (as the late Plekhanov, when he was a Marxist and revolutionary, was fond of saying). It is possible that the "breach" will be forced, "the ice broken" by a parliamentary crisis, or by a crisis arising out of the colonial and imperialist contradictions, which are becoming hopelessly entangled and increasingly painful and acute, or perhaps by some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revolution in England (not a single Communist has any doubt on that score; as far as we are concerned this question is settled, and settled definitely); what we are discussing is the *immediate cause* that will rouse the at present dormant proletarian masses and bring them right up against the revolution. Let us not forget that in the French bourgeois republic, for example, in a situation which from both the international and national aspect was a hundred times less revolutionary than the present, such an "unexpected" and "petty" immediate cause as one of the many thousands of dishonest tricks

the reactionary military caste play (the Dreyfus case) was enough to bring the people to the verge of civil war!

The Communists in Great Britain should constantly, unremittingly and undeviatingly utilize parliamentary elections and all the vicissitudes of the Irish, colonial and world imperialist policy of the British government, and all other fields, spheres and sides of public life, and work, in all of them in a new way, in a Communist way, in the spirit of the Third, and not of the Second International. I have neither the time nor the space here to describe the "Russian," Bolshevik methods of participation in parliamentary elections and in the parliamentary struggle; but I can assure the foreign Communists that it was totally unlike the usual West European parliamentary campaign. From this the conclusion is often drawn: "Well, that was in Russia; in our country parliamentarism is different." This conclusion is wrong. The very reason the Communists, the adherents of the Third International in all countries, exist at all is to *change*, all along the line, in all spheres of life, the old Socialist, trade unionist, syndicalist, parliamentary work into *new* work, Communist work. In Russia, too, we always had a great deal of opportunist and purely bourgeois commercialism and capitalist swindling during election times. The Communists in Western Europe and America must learn to create a new, unusual, non-opportunist, non-careerist parliamentarism; the Communist Parties must issue their slogans; real proletarians, with the help of the unorganized and downtrodden poor, should scatter and distribute leaflets, canvas workers' houses and the cottages of the rural proletarians and peasants in the remote villages (fortunately there are not nearly so many remote villages in Europe as there are in Russia, and in England there are very few); they should go into the most common taverns, penetrate into the unions, societies and casual meetings where the common people gather, and talk to the people, not in scientific (and not in very parliamentary) language; they should not at all strive to "get seats" in parliament, but should everywhere strive to rouse the minds of the masses and draw them into the struggle, to hold the bourgeois to their word and utilize the apparatus they have set up, the elections they have appointed, the appeals to the country they have made, and to tell the people what Bolshevism is in a way that has never been possible (under bourgeois rule) outside of election times (not counting, of course, times of big strikes, when, in Russia, a *similar* apparatus for widespread popular agitation worked even more intensively). It is very difficult to do in Western Europe and America, very, very difficult; but it can and must be done, because the tasks of Communism cannot be fulfilled without effort; and the effort must be directed towards fulfilling *practical* tasks, ever more varied, ever more closely connected with all branches of social life, *winning* branch after branch and sphere after sphere *from the bourgeoisie*.

In Great Britain, further, the work of propaganda, agitation and organization among the armed forces and among the oppressed and unfran-

chised nationalities in *"one's own"* state (Ireland, the colonies) must also be organized in the new way (not in a Socialist, but a Communist way, not in a reformist, but a revolutionary way). Because in the era of imperialism generally, and especially now, after the war, which was a torment to the people and quickly opened their eyes to the truth (*viz.*, that tens of millions of people were killed and maimed only for the purpose of deciding whether the British or the German pirates should plunder the largest number of countries), all these spheres of social life are being crammed full of inflammable material and are creating numerous causes of conflicts, crises and the accentuation of the class struggle. We do not and cannot know which spark—of the innumerable sparks that are flying around in all countries as a result of the economic and political world crisis—will kindle the conflagration, in the sense of specially rousing the masses, and we must, therefore, with the aid of our new, Communist principles, set to work to "stir up" all and sundry, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for otherwise we shall not be able to cope with our tasks, we shall not be all-round, we shall not master all arms and we shall not be prepared to achieve either the victory over the bourgeoisie (which arranged all sides of social life—and has now disarranged them—in its bourgeois way) or the impending Communist reorganization of every sphere of life after the victory.

Since the proletarian revolution in Russia and its victories on an international scale, which the bourgeoisie and the philistines did not expect, the whole world has changed, and everywhere the bourgeoisie has also changed. It is terrified of "Bolshevism," incensed with it almost to the point of frenzy, and, precisely for that reason, it is, on the one hand, accelerating the progress of events and, on the other, concentrating attention on the suppression of Bolshevism by force, and thereby weakening its position in a number of other fields. The Communists in all advanced countries should be mindful of both these circumstances in their tactics.

When the Russian Cadets and Kerensky raised a furious hue-and-cry against the Bolsheviks—especially after April 1917, and more particularly in June and July 1917—they "overdid" it. Millions of copies of bourgeois papers, shrieking in every key against the Bolsheviks, helped to induce the masses to appraise Bolshevism; and, apart from the newspapers, all public life was being permeated with discussions about Bolshevism just because of the "zeal" of the bourgeoisie. The millionaires of all countries are now behaving on an international scale in a way that deserves our heartiest thanks. They are hounding Bolshevism with the same zeal as did Kerensky and Co.; they are, moreover, "overdoing" it and *helping* us just as Kerensky did. When the French bourgeoisie makes Bolshevism the central issue at the elections, and abuses the comparatively moderate or vacillating Socialists for being Bolsheviks; when the American bourgeoisie, having completely lost its head, seizes thousands and thousands of people on suspicion of Bolshevism, creates an atmosphere of panic and

broadcasts stories of Bolshevik plots; when the British bourgeoisie—the most "solid" in the world—despite all its wisdom and experience, commits incredible follies, founds richly endowed "anti-Bolshevik societies," creates a special literature on Bolshevism, and hires an extra number of scientists, agitators and parsons to combat it—we must bow and thank the capitalist gentry. They are working for us. They are helping us to get the masses interested in the nature and significance of Bolshevism. And they cannot do otherwise; for they have *already* failed to stifle Bolshevism by "silence."

But at the same time, the bourgeoisie sees only one side practically of Bolshevism, *viz.*, insurrection, violence, terror; it therefore strives to prepare itself for resistance and opposition particularly in *this* field. It is possible that in certain instances, in certain countries, and for certain brief periods, it will succeed in this. We must reckon with such a possibility, and there will be absolutely nothing terrible for us if it does succeed. Communism "springs" from positively all sides of public life; its shoots are to be seen literally everywhere. The "contagion" (to use the favourite metaphor of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois police, the one most "pleasant" to them) has very thoroughly permeated the organism and has completely impregnated it. If one of the channels is "stopped up" with special care, the "contagion" will find another, sometimes a very unexpected one. Life will assert itself. Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, go to extremes, commit follies, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance, and endeavour to kill off (in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) more hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of yesterday's and to-morrow's Bolsheviks. In acting thus, the bourgeoisie is acting as all classes doomed by history have acted. Communists should know that the future in any case belongs to them; therefore, we can (and must) combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle with the coolest and most sober estimation of the frenzied ravings of the bourgeoisie. The Russian Revolution was cruelly defeated in 1905; the Russian Bolsheviks were defeated in July 1917; over 15,000 German Communists were slaughtered as a result of the wily provocation and cunning manoeuvres of Scheidemann and Noske in conjunction with the bourgeoisie and the monarchist generals; White terror is raging in Finland and Hungary. But in all cases and in all countries Communism is becoming steeled and is spreading; its roots are so deep that persecution does not weaken it, does not debilitate it, but strengthens it. Only one thing is lacking to enable us to march forward more confidently and firmly to victory, namely, the universal and thoroughly thought-out appreciation by all Communists in all countries of the necessity of displaying the utmost *flexibility* in their tactics. The Communist movement, which is developing magnificently, in the advanced countries especially, now lacks this appreciation and the ability to apply it in practice.

What happened to such leaders of the Second International, such highly

erudite Marxists devoted to Socialism as Kautsky, Otto Bauer and others, could (and should) serve as a useful lesson They fully appreciated the need for flexible tactics, they learned and taught Marxian dialectics (and much of what they have done in this respect will forever remain a valuable contribution to Socialist literature), but *in the application* of these dialectics they committed such a mistake, or proved in practice to be so *un*dialectical, so incapable of taking into account the rapid change of forms and the rapid acquiring of new content by the old forms, that their fate is not much more enviable than that of Hyndman, Guesde and Plekhanov.

The main reason for their bankruptcy was that they were "enchanted" by one definite form of growth of the working-class and Socialist movement, they forgot all about the one-sidedness of this form, they were afraid of seeing the sharp break which objective conditions made inevitable, and continued to repeat simple, routine, and, at a first glance, incontestable truths, such as "three is more than two" But politics is more like algebra than arithmetic, and still more like higher mathematics than elementary mathematics In reality, all the old forms of the Socialist movement have acquired a new content, and, consequently, a new sign, the "minus" sign, has appeared in front of all the figures, but our wiseacres stubbornly continued (and still continue) to persuade themselves and others that "minus three" is more than "minus two"!

We must try to prevent Communists from making the same mistake, only the other way round, or, rather, we must see to it that the *same mistake*, only the other way round, made by the "Left" Communists, is corrected as soon as possible and overcome as quickly and painlessly as possible It is not only Right doctrinairism that is a mistake, Left doctrinairism is also a mistake Of course, the mistake of Left doctrinairism in Communism is at present a thousand times less dangerous and less significant than the mistake of Right doctrinairism (*i e*, social chauvinism and Kautskyism), but, after all, that is only due to the fact that Left Communism is a very young trend, is only just coming into being It is only for this reason that, under certain conditions, the disease can be easily cured, and we must set to work to cure it with the utmost energy

The old forms have burst asunder, for it has turned out that their new content—an anti proletarian and reactionary content—had attained inordinate development There is now, from the standpoint of the development of the international Communist movement, such a lasting, strong and powerful content to our work (for Soviet power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat) that it can *and must* manifest itself in every form, both new and old, it can and must regenerate, conquer and subjugate all forms, not only the new, but also the old—not for the purpose of reconciling itself with the old, but for the purpose of converting all and every form—new and old—into a weapon for the complete, final, decisive and irrevocable victory of Communism

The Communists must exert every effort to direct the working-class movement and social development in general along the straightest and quickest road to the universal victory of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is an incontestable truth. But it is enough to take one little step further—a step that might seem to be in the same direction—and truth becomes error! We have only to say, as the German and British Left Communists say, that we recognize only one road, only the direct road, that we do not agree with tacking, manoeuvring, compromising—and it will be a mistake which may cause, and in part has already caused, and is causing, very serious harm to Communism. Right doctrinairism persisted in recognizing only the old forms, and became totally bankrupt, for it did not perceive the new content. Left doctrinairism persists in the unconditional repudiation of certain old forms and fails to see that the new content is forcing its way through all and sundry forms, that it is our duty as Communists to master all forms, to learn how, with the maximum rapidity, to supplement one form with another, to substitute one for another, and to adapt our tactics to every such change not called forth by our class, or by our efforts.

World revolution has received such a powerful impetus and acceleration from the horrors, atrocities and abominations of the world imperialist war and from the hopelessness of the situation created thereby—the revolution is spreading in breadth and depth with such magnificent rapidity, with such a splendid variety of changing forms, with such an instructive, practical refutation of all doctrinairism, that there is every ground for hoping for a rapid and complete recovery of the international Communist movement from the infantile disorder of "Left-wing" Communism.

April 27, 1920

APPENDIX

Before the publishers of our country—which has been plundered by the world imperialists in revenge for the proletarian revolution, and which is still being plundered and blockaded by them regardless of all promises they made to their workers—had succeeded in getting out my pamphlet, additional material arrived from abroad Without claiming to present in my pamphlet anything more than the cursory notes of a publicist, I shall touch briefly upon a few points

I

THE SPLIT AMONG THE GERMAN COMMUNISTS

The split among the Communists in Germany has become an accomplished fact The "Lefts," or the "opposition on principle," have formed a separate Communist Labour Party, as distinct from the Communist Party Apparently, a split is also imminent in Italy—I say apparently, as I have only two additional issues (Nos 7 and 8) of the Left newspaper, *Il Soviet*, in which the possibility and necessity of a split is openly discussed, and mention is also made of a congress of the "Abstentionist" faction (or the boycottists, *i e* , opponents of participation in parliament), which faction is still a part of the Italian Socialist Party

There is reason to fear that the split with the "Lefts," the anti parliamentarians (in part also anti politicals, who are opposed to a political party and to work in the trade unions) will become an international phenomenon, like the split with the "Centrists" (or Kautskyites, Longuetites, "Independents," etc) Be it so At all events, a split is preferable to a confusion which impedes the ideological, theoretical and revolutionary growth and maturing of the Party and prevents harmonious, really organized practical work really paving the way for the dictatorship of the proletariat

Let the "Lefts" put themselves to a practical test on a national and international scale, let them try to prepare for (and then realize) the dictatorship of the proletariat without a strictly centralized party with an iron discipline, without the ability to master every sphere, every branch, every variety of political and cultural work Practical experience will soon make them wiser,

But every effort must be made to prevent the split with the "Lefts" from impeding (or to see that it impedes as little as possible) the necessary amalgamation into a single party—which is inevitable in the near future—of all those in the working-class movement who sincerely and conscientiously stand for Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was the exceptional fortune of the Bolsheviks in Russia to have fifteen years in which to wage a systematic and thorough struggle both against the Mensheviks (that is, the opportunists and "Centrists") and against the "Lefts," long before the direct mass struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat began. In Europe and America the same work will now have to be done by "forced marches." Certain individuals, especially among the unsuccessful claimants to leadership, may (if they lack proletarian discipline and are not "honest with themselves") persist in their mistakes for a long time; but when the time is ripe the masses of the workers will easily and quickly unite themselves and unite all sincere Communists to form a single party capable of establishing the Soviet system and the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

II

THE COMMUNISTS AND THE INDEPENDENTS IN GERMANY

I have expressed the opinion in this pamphlet that a compromise between the Communists and the Left wing of the Independents was necessary and useful to Communism, but that it would not be easy to effect. The newspapers which I have subsequently received have confirmed this opinion on both points. In No. 32 of *The Red Flag*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany (*Die Rote Fahne*,

---

* With regard to the question of the future amalgamation of the "Left" Communists, the anti-parliamentarians, with the Communists in general, I would make the following additional remarks. As far as I have been able to familiarize myself with the newspapers of the "Left" Communists and with those of the Communists in general in Germany, I find that the former are superior to the latter in that they are better agitators among the masses. I have repeatedly observed something similar to this in the history of the Bolshevik Party, though on a smaller scale and in individual local organizations, not on a national scale. For instance, in 1907-08 the "Left" Bolsheviks on certain occasions and in certain places carried on more successful agitation among the masses than we did. This may be partly due to the fact that at a revolutionary moment, or at a time when revolutionary recollections are still fresh, it is easier to approach the masses with tactics of "mere" negation. This, however, is hardly an argument for the correctness of such tactics. At all events there is not the least doubt that a Communist *party* which wishes to be the real vanguard, the advanced detachment of the revolutionary *class*, the proletariat, and which, in addition, wishes to learn to lead the broad *masses*—not only the proletarian, but also the *non*-proletarian masses of toilers and exploited—has to know how to carry on propaganda, how to organize, and how to carry on agitation in a manner most accessible, most comprehensible, most clear and vivid both to the urban, factory population and to the rural population.

Zentralorgan der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands—Spartacusbund—of March 26, 1920), there appeared a "statement" of this Central Committee on the Kapp-Luttwitz military "putsch" (conspiracy, adventure) and on the "Socialist government." This statement is quite correct both as to its basic premise and as to its practical conclusions. The basic premise is that at the present moment there is no "objective basis" for the dictatorship of the proletariat because "the majority of the urban workers" support the Independents. The conclusion is—a promise to be a "loyal opposition" (*i.e.*, renunciation of preparations for a "violent overthrow") to a "Socialist government if it excludes bourgeois-capitalist parties."

Undoubtedly, these tactics are in the main correct. But although it is not worth while dwelling on minor inexactitudes of formulation, we cannot refrain from saying that a government of social-traitors cannot be described (in an official statement of the Communist Party) as a "Socialist" government; that one cannot speak of the exclusion of "bourgeois-capitalist parties," when the parties both of Scheidemann and of Messrs. the Kautskys and Crispiens are petty-bourgeois democratic parties; that it is impermissible to write such things as are contained in paragraph 4 of the statement, which declares:

> ". . . For the further winning of the proletarian masses for Communism, a state of things where political freedom could be enjoyed without restraint, and where bourgeois democracy could not manifest itself as a dictatorship of capital is of the greatest importance from the standpoint of the development of the proletarian dictatorship."

Such a state of things is impossible. Petty-bourgeois leaders, the German Hendersons (Scheidemanns) and Snowdens (Crispiens), do not and cannot go beyond the bounds of bourgeois democracy, which, in its turn, cannot but be the dictatorship of capital. There was no need at all to write such things, which are wrong in principle and harmful politically, for the attainment of the practical results for which the Central Committee of the Communist Party had been quite rightly striving. It would have been sufficient to say (if one wished to observe parliamentary amenities) that as long as the majority of the urban workers follow the Independents, we Communists must do nothing to prevent these workers overcoming their last philistine-democratic (and, consequently, "bourgeois-capitalist") illusions by going through the experience of having their "own" government. That is sufficient ground for a compromise which is really necessary, and should consist in renouncing for a certain period, all attempts at the violent overthrow of a government which enjoys the confidence of a majority of the urban workers. But in every day mass agitation, in which one is not bound by official parliamentary amenities, one might, of course, add: Let rascals like the Scheidemanns, and

philistines like the Kautskys and Crispiens reveal by their deeds how they have been fooled themselves and how they are fooling the workers; their "clean" government will itself do the "cleanest" job of all in "cleaning" the Augean stables of Socialism, Social-Democracy and other forms of social treachery.

The real nature of the present leaders of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany (of whom it is wrongly said that they have already lost all influence, whereas, in reality, they are even more dangerous to the proletariat than the Hungarian Social-Democrats who styled themselves Communists and promised to "support" the dictatorship of the proletariat) was revealed once again during the German Kornilov period, *i.e.*, the Kapp-Luttwitz "putsch"* A small but striking illustration is afforded by two brief articles—one by Karl Kautsky entitled "Decisive Hours" (*Entscheidende Stunden*) in *Freiheit* (*Freedom*, the organ of the Independents) of March 30, 1920, and the other by Arthur Crispien entitled "On the Political Situation" (in this same newspaper issue of April 14, 1920). These gentlemen are absolutely incapable of thinking and reasoning like revolutionaries. They are snivelling philistine democrats, who become a thousand times more dangerous to the proletariat when they claim to be supporters of Soviet government and of the dictatorship of the proletariat, because, actually, whenever a difficult and dangerous situation arises they are sure to commit treachery . . . while "sincerely" believing that they are helping the proletariat! Did not the Hungarian Social-Democrats, having rechristened themselves Communists, also want to "help" the proletariat when, owing to their cowardice and spinelessness, they considered the situation of the Soviet government in Hungary hopeless and went snivelling to the agents of the Entente capitalists and the Entente hangmen?

III

TURATI AND CO. IN ITALY

The issues of *Il Soviet*, the Italian newspaper referred to above, fully confirm what I have said in the pamphlet about the error committed by the Italian Socialist Party in tolerating such members and even such a group of parliamentarians in its ranks. It is still further confirmed by such an outside observer as the Rome correspondent of the English bourgeois-liberal newspaper, *The Manchester Guardian*, whose interview with

---

* Incidentally, this has been dealt with in an exceptionally clear, concise, exact and Marxist way in the excellent organ of the Austrian Communist Party of March 28 and 30, 1920 (*Die Rote Fahne*, Vienna, 1920, Nos. 266 and 267; L. L.: "*Ein neuer Abschnitt der deutschen Revolution*" ["A New Stage of the German Revolution."—*Ed*]).

Turati is published in that paper on March 12, 1920. This correspondent writes:

> "Signor Turati's opinion is that the revolutionary peril is not such as to cause undue anxiety in Italy. The Maximalists are playing with the fire of Soviet theories only to keep the masses roused and in a state of excitement. These theories are, however, merely legendary notions, unripe programs unfit for practical use. They can only serve to keep the working classes in a state of expectation. The very men who use them as a lure to dazzle proletarian eyes find themselves compelled to fight a daily battle for the extortion of some often trifling economic improvements, so as to put off the day when the working classes will shed their illusions and faith in their favourite myths. Hence a long string of strikes of all dimensions, called on any pretext, up to the very latest ones in the mail and railway services—strikes which make the already hard conditions of the country still worse. The country is irritated owing to the difficulties connected with its Adriatic problem, it is weighed down by its foreign debt and by the excessive issue of paper currency, and yet it is still far from realizing the necessity of adopting that discipline of work which alone can restore order and prosperity."

It is clear as daylight that this English correspondent has blurted out the truth, which is in all probability being concealed and glossed over by Turati himself and his bourgeois defenders, accomplices and inspirers in Italy. This truth is that the ideas and political activities of Messrs. Turati, Treves, Modigliany, Dugoni and Co. are really and precisely such as are described by the English correspondent. It is downright social treachery. This advocacy of order and discipline among the workers, who are wage slaves toiling to enrich the capitalist, is precious! And how familiar to us Russians all these Menshevik speeches are! What a valuable admission it is that the masses are *for* Soviet government! How stupid and vulgarly bourgeois is the failure to understand the revolutionary role of spontaneously spreading strikes! Yes, indeed, the correspondent of the English bourgeois liberal newspaper has rendered a back-handed service to Messrs. Turati and Co., and has well confirmed the correctness of the demand of Comrade Bordiga and his friends of *Il Soviet*, who are insisting that the Italian Socialist Party, if it really wants to be *for* the Third International, should drum Messrs. Turati and Co. out of its ranks and become a Communist Party both in name and in fact.

IV

INCORRECT CONCLUSIONS FROM CORRECT PREMISES

But Comrade Bordiga and his "Left" friends draw from their correct criticism of Messrs. Turati and Co. the wrong conclusion that participation in parliament is harmful in general. The Italian "Lefts" cannot advance even a shadow of serious argument in support of this view. They simply do not know (or try to forget) the international examples of really revolutionary and Communist utilization of bourgeois parliament which has been of unquestionable value in preparing for the proletarian revolution. They simply cannot conceive of a "new" method of utilizing parliament, but keep shouting and endlessly repeating themselves about the "old," non-Bolshevik method.

This is precisely where their fundamental mistake lies. Not only in the parliamentary field, but in *all* fields of activity Communism *must introduce* (and without long, persistent and stubborn effort it *will be unable* to introduce) something new in principle that will represent a radical break with the traditions of the Second International (while retaining and developing what was good in the latter).

Let us take, say, journalistic work. Newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets perform a necessary work of propaganda, agitation and organization. Not a single mass movement in any at all civilized country can dispense with a journalistic apparatus. No outcries against "leaders," no solemn vows to preserve the purity of the masses from the influence of leaders will obviate the necessity of utilizing people who come from a bourgeois intellectual environment for this work, or will get rid of the bourgeois-democratic, "private property" atmosphere and environment in which this work is performed under capitalism. Even two and a half years after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, after the conquest of political power by the proletariat, we still have this atmosphere around us, this mass (peasant, artisan) environment of bourgeois-democratic property relations.

Parliamentarism is one form of activity, journalism is another. The content of both can be Communist, and it should be Communist if those engaged in both spheres are real Communists, are real members of a proletarian mass Party. Yet, in neither sphere—nor *in any other sphere of activity* under capitalism and during the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism—is it possible to avoid those difficulties which the proletariat must overcome, those special problems which the proletariat must solve in order to utilize for its own purposes the services of those who have come from the ranks of the bourgeoisie, in order to gain the victory over bourgeois intellectual prejudices and influences, in order to weaken the resistance of (and, ultimately, completely to transform) the petty-bourgeois environment.

Did we not, before the war of 1914-18, witness in all countries an extraordinary abundance of instances of extreme "Left" anarchists, syndicalists and others fulminating against parliamentarism, deriding parliamentary Socialists who had become vulgarized in the bourgeois spirit, castigating their careerism, and so on and so forth, and yet themselves making the same kind of bourgeois career *through* journalism and *through* work in the syndicates (trade unions)? Are not the examples of Messrs. Jouhaux and Merrheim, to limit oneself to France, typical?

The childishness of those who "repudiate" participation in parliament consists precisely in the fact that they think it possible to *"solve"* the difficult problem of combating bourgeois-democratic influences *within* the working-class movement by such a "simple," "easy," supposedly revolutionary method, when in reality they are only running away from their own shadow, closing their eyes to difficulties and trying to brush them aside with mere words. Shameless careerism, bourgeois utilization of parliamentary posts, glaring reformist perversion of parliamentary activity, vulgar, petty-bourgeois routine are all unquestionably common and prevalent features that are engendered by capitalism everywhere, not only outside but also inside the working-class movement. But then capitalism, and the bourgeois environment it creates (which disappears very slowly even after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for the peasantry is constantly regenerating the bourgeoisie), give rise to what is also essentially bourgeois careerism, national chauvinism, petty-bourgeois vulgarity, etc., only varying insignificantly in form—in positively every sphere of activity and life.

You think, my dear boycottists and anti-parliamentarians, that you are "terribly revolutionary," but in reality *you are frightened* by the comparatively small difficulties of the struggle against bourgeois influences within the working-class movement, whereas your victory—*i.e.*, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the conquest of political power by the proletariat—will create *these very same* difficulties on a still larger, an infinitely larger scale. Like children, you are frightened by a small difficulty which confronts you today, not understanding that to-morrow and the day after you will anyhow have to learn, and learn thoroughly, to overcome the same difficulties, only on an immeasurably greater scale.

Under a Soviet system, your proletarian party and ours will be invaded by a still larger number of bourgeois intellectuals. They will worm their way into the Soviets, the courts, and the administration, for Communism cannot be built up otherwise than with the aid of the human material created by capitalism, and the bourgeois intellectuals cannot be expelled and destroyed, but must be vanquished, remoulded, assimilated and re-educated, just as we must—in a protracted struggle waged on the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat—re-educate the proletarians themselves, who do not abandon their petty-bourgeois prejudices at one stroke, by a miracle, at the behest of the Virgin Mary, at the behest of a slogan,

resolution or decree, but only in the course of a long and difficult mass struggle against mass petty-bourgeois influences. Under Soviet rule these same problems, which the anti-parliamentarians are now so proudly, so haughtily, so lightly and so childishly brushing aside with a wave of the hand—*these very same* problems are arising anew *within* the Soviets, within the Soviet administration, among the Soviet "attorneys" (in Russia we have abolished, and have rightly abolished, the bourgeois legal bar, but it is reviving again under the guise of the "Soviet" "attorneys"). Among the Soviet engineers, the Soviet school teachers and the privileged, *i.e.*, the most highly skilled and best situated, *workers* in the Soviet factories, we observe a constant revival of absolutely *all* the bad traits peculiar to bourgeois parliamentarism, and we shall gradually conquer this evil only by constant, tireless, prolonged and persistent struggle, proletarian organization and discipline.

Of course, it is very "difficult" under the rule of the bourgeoisie to eradicate bourgeois habits from our own, *i.e.*, the Workers' Party; it is "difficult" to expel from the Party the usual kind of parliamentary leader who has been hopelessly corrupted by bourgeois prejudices; it is "difficult" to subject to proletarian discipline the absolutely essential (even if very limited) number of people coming from the ranks of the bourgeoisie; it is "difficult" to form in a bourgeois parliament a Communist group fully worthy of the working class; it is "difficult" to ensure that the Communist parliamentarians do not play the bourgeois parliamentary game of skittles, but concern themselves with the very urgent work of propaganda, agitation and organization of the masses. All this is "difficult," there is no doubt about it; it was difficult in Russia, and it is incomparably more difficult in Western Europe and America, where the bourgeoisie is far stronger, where bourgeois-democratic traditions are stronger, and so on.

Yet all these "difficulties" are mere child's play compared with precisely *the same sort* of problems which in any event the proletariat will inevitably have to solve in order to achieve victory, both during the proletarian revolution and after the seizure of power by the proletariat. Compared with *these* truly gigantic problems of re-educating, under the proletarian dictatorship, millions of peasants and small masters, hundreds of thousands of office employees, officials and bourgeois intellectuals, of subordinating them all to the proletarian state and to proletarian leadership, of vanquishing their bourgeois habits and traditions—compared with these gigantic problems it is childishly easy to establish, under the rule of the bourgeoisie and in a bourgeois parliament, a really Communist group of a real proletarian party.

If our "Left" and anti-parliamentarian comrades do not learn to overcome even such a small difficulty now, we may safely assert that either they will prove incapable of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat, will be unable to subordinate and remould the bourgeois intellectuals and bourgeois institutions on a wide scale, or they will have to complete

their education in a hurry, and in consequence of such haste they will do a great deal of harm to the cause of the proletariat, they will commit more errors than usual, will manifest more than the average weakness and inefficiency, and so on and so forth.

As long as the bourgeoisie has not been overthrown, and then as long as small-scale economy and small commodity production have not entirely disappeared, the bourgeois atmosphere, proprietary habits and petty-bourgeois traditions will hamper proletarian work both outside and inside the working-class movement, not only in one field of activity, parliamentary, but inevitably in every field of social activity, in all cultural and political spheres without exception. And the attempt to brush aside, to fence oneself off from *one* of the "unpleasant" problems or difficulties in one sphere of activity is a profound mistake, which will later most certainly have to be paid for dearly. We must study and learn how to master every sphere of work and activity without exception, to overcome all difficulties and all bourgeois habits, customs and traditions everywhere. Any other way of presenting the question is just trifling, just childishness.

May 12, 1920

Written *April May 1920*
First published in pamphlet
form in June 1920

PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF THESES ON THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

FOR THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

1. Only the urban and industrial proletariat, led by the Communist Party, can liberate the rural working masses from the yoke of capital and big landlordism, from ruin and imperialist wars, which must inevitably break out again and again if the capitalist system is preserved. There is no salvation for the rural working masses except in an alliance with the Communist proletariat, and unless they give the latter devoted support in its revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the yoke of the landlords (big landowners) and the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the industrial workers cannot fulfil their world-historical mission of emancipating mankind from the yoke of capital and from wars if they concern themselves exclusively with their narrow craft, their narrow trade interests, and smugly confine themselves to showing care and concern only for the improvement of their own, sometimes tolerable and petty-bourgeois, conditions.

And this is just what happens in many advanced countries to the "labour aristocracy" that forms the base of the so-called Socialist parties of the Second International, being in reality bitter enemies and betrayers of Socialism, petty-bourgeois chauvinists and agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement. The proletariat is a really revolutionary class, and acts in a really Socialist manner, only when it comes out and acts as the vanguard of all the toilers and the exploited, as their leader in the struggle for the overthrow of the exploiters; but this cannot be done unless the class struggle is carried into the rural districts, unless the rural working masses are united around the Communist Party of the urban proletariat, and unless the former are trained by the latter.

2. The rural working and exploited masses, whom the urban proletariat must lead into the struggle, or, at all events, win over, are represented in all capitalist countries by the following classes:

First, the agricultural proletariat, wage labourers (by the year, season or day), who obtain their livelihood by working for hire in capitalist agricultural enterprises. The organization of this class (political, military, trade union, co-operative, cultural, educational, etc.) independently and

separately from other groups of the rural population, the conduct of intense propaganda and agitation among this class, and the winning of its support for Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat constitute the *fundamental* task of the Communist Parties in all countries.

Second, the semi proletarians, or dwarf peasants, i e, those who obtain their livelihood partly as wage labourers in agricultural and industrial capitalist enterprises and partly by working their own, or rented, plots of land, which provide only a part of the means of subsistence for their families This group of the rural working population is very numerous in all capitalist countries, its existence and special position are obscured by the representatives of the bourgeoisie and by the yellow "Socialists" belonging to the Second International, some deliberately deceiving the workers and some blindly submitting to routine petty-bourgeois views, and generally confusing this group with the mass of the "peasantry" as a whole This bourgeois method of deceiving the workers is most to be observed in Germany and in France, but also in America and other countries If the work of the Communist Party is properly organized, this group will become its assured supporter, for the lot of these semi proletarians is a very hard one and they stand to gain enormously and immediately from Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Third, the small peasantry, i e, the small tillers, who hold, either as owners or as tenants, small plots of land which enable them to meet the requirements of their families and their farms without hiring outside labour. This stratum, as such, undoubtedly stands to gain by the victory of the proletariat, which will bring it immediate and full: a) relief from the necessity of paying rent or a share of the crop (for example, the *métayers*, share croppers, in France, also in Italy and other countries) to the big landowners, b) relief from mortgages, c) relief from the numerous forms of oppression by, and dependence on, the big landowners (use of forest lands, etc) and d) immediate assistance for their farms on the part of the proletarian state (facilities for using agricultural implements and part of the buildings on the big capitalist farms expropriated by the proletariat, the immediate transformation by the proletarian state of the rural co operative societies and agricultural associations from organizations which under capitalism mostly serve the rich and middle peasants into organizations that will primarily assist the poor, i e, the proletarians, semi proletarians, small peasants, etc), and many other forms of assistance.

At the same time the Communist Party must clearly realize that in the period of transition from capitalism to Communism, i e, in the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, this stratum, or, at all events, part of it, will inevitably sway towards unrestricted freedom of trade and the free enjoyment of the rights of private property, for, consisting already of sellers (although in a small way) of articles of consumption, this stratum had been corrupted by profiteering and proprietary habits However, if a firm proletarian policy is pursued, and if the victorious proletariat deals

very resolutely with the big landowners and the big peasants, the vacillation of this stratum cannot be considerable and cannot alter the fact that, on the whole, it will support the proletarian revolution.

3. Together, the three groups enumerated constitute the majority of the rural population in all capitalist countries. Therefore, the success of the proletarian revolution is fully assured, not only in the towns but in the rural districts as well. The opposite view is widespread; but it only persists, firstly, because of the deception systematically practised by bourgeois science and statistics, which do everything to obscure both the wide gulf that separates the above-mentioned classes in the rural districts from the exploiters, the landlords and capitalists, and the wide gulf that separates the semi-proletarians and small peasants from the big peasants; it persists, secondly, because of the inability and unwillingness of the heroes of the yellow, Second International and of the "labour aristocracy" in the advanced countries, which has been corrupted by imperialist privileges, to conduct genuinely proletarian revolutionary work of propaganda, agitation and organization among the rural poor; the attention of the opportunists was and is wholly concentrated on inventing theoretical and practical compromises with the bourgeoisie, including the big and middle peasants (concerning whom see below), and not on the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois government and the bourgeoisie by the proletariat; it persists, thirdly, because of the obstinate refusal to understand—so obstinate as to be equivalent to a prejudice (connected with all the other bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices)—a truth which has been fully demonstrated by Marxist theory and fully corroborated by the experience of the proletarian revolution in Russia, *viz.*, that although all the three above-enumerated categories of the rural population—which in all, even the most advanced, countries are incredibly downtrodden, disunited, crushed, and doomed to semi-barbarous conditions of existence—are economically, socially, and culturally interested in the victory of Socialism, they are capable of giving resolute support to the revolutionary proletariat only *after* the latter has won political power, only *after* it has resolutely dealt with the big landowners and capitalists, only *after* these downtrodden people see *in practice* that they have an organized leader and champion, strong and firm enough to assist and lead them and to show them the right path.

4. By "middle peasants," in the economic sense, are meant small tillers who, firstly, also hold, either as owners or tenants, small plots of land, but such as, under capitalism, provide them, as a general rule, not only with a meagre subsistence for their families and their farms, but also with the possibility of securing a certain surplus, which, at least in good years, may be converted into capital; and, secondly, fairly frequently (for example, one farm out of two or three) resort to the hire of outside labour. A concrete example of the middle peasants in an advanced capitalist country is provided by the group of farms of 5 to 10 hectares

in Germany, where, according to the census of 1907, the number of farms employing hired labourers is about one-third of the total number of farms in this group.* In France, where the cultivation of special crops is more developed—for example, vine-growing, which requires a particularly large amount of labour—this group probably employs outside hired labour to a somewhat larger extent.

The revolutionary proletariat cannot set itself the task—at least not in the immediate future and in the initial period of the dictatorship of the proletariat—of winning over this stratum, but must confine itself to the task of neutralizing it, *i.e.*, making it neutral in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Vacillations of this stratum between these two forces are inevitable, and in the beginning of the new epoch, in developed capitalist countries, its main trend will be towards the bourgeoisie. For among this stratum the outlook and the sentiments of property-owners predominate; it has an immediate interest in profiteering, in "freedom" of trade and in property, and stands in direct antagonism to the wage workers. The victorious proletariat will directly improve the position of this stratum by abolishing rent and mortgages. In the majority of capitalist countries the proletarian state should not immediately abolish private property completely; at all events, it guarantees both the small and the middle peasantry not only the preservation of their plots of land, but also *the enlargement of the latter by the addition of the total* area they usually rented (abolition of rent).

The combination of measures of this sort with a ruthless struggle against the bourgeoisie fully guarantees the success of the policy of neutralization. The proletarian state must effect the passage to collective agriculture with extreme caution and only very gradually, by the force of example, without any coercion of the middle peasant.

5. The big peasants (*Grossbauern*) are capitalist entrepreneurs in agriculture who as a rule employ several hired labourers and are connected with the "peasantry" only by their low cultural level, habits of life and the manual labour they themselves perform on their farms. These constitute the largest of the bourgeois strata which are direct and determined enemies of the revolutionary proletariat. In all their work in the rural districts, the Communist Parties must centre their attention mainly on the struggle against this stratum, on liberating the toiling and exploited majority of the rural population from the ideological and political influence of these exploiters, etc.

* Here are the exact figures: number of farms of 5 to 10 hectares—652,798 (out of a total of 5,736,082); these employed 487,704 hired labourers of various kinds, while the members of the farmers' families (*Familienangehörige*) working on the farms numbered 2,003,633. In Austria, according to the census of 1910, this group comprised 383,331 farms, of which 126,136 employed hired labour; the hired labourers working on these farms numbered 146,044 and the working members of the farmers' families 1,265,969. The total number of farms in Austria was 2,856,349.

After the victory of the proletariat in the towns, all sorts of manifestations of resistance and sabotage as well as direct armed actions of a counter-revolutionary character on the part of this stratum are absolutely inevitable. Therefore, the revolutionary proletariat must immediately set to work to prepare, ideologically and organizationally, the forces necessary for completely disarming this stratum, and, simultaneously, with the overthrow of the capitalists in industry, dealing it a determined, ruthless and smashing blow at the very first signs of resistance, for this purpose arming the rural proletariat and organizing village Soviets in which the exploiters must have no place, and in which the proletarians and semi-proletarians must be ensured predominance.

However, the expropriation even of the big peasants certainly cannot be made an immediate task of the victorious proletariat, for the material, in particular the technical conditions, as well as the social conditions for the socialization of such farms are still lacking. In individual, and probably exceptional, cases, those parts of their land which they rent out in small plots, or which are particularly needed by the surrounding small peasant population will be confiscated; the small peasants will also be guaranteed, on certain terms, the free use of part of the agricultural machines belonging to the big peasants, etc. As a general rule, however, the proletarian state must allow the big peasants to retain their land, confiscating it only if they resist the power of the toilers and the exploited. The experience of the Russian proletarian revolution, in which the fight against the big peasantry was complicated and protracted by a number of special conditions, nevertheless showed that, when taught a severe lesson for the slightest attempt at resistance, this stratum is capable of loyally fulfilling the requirements of the proletarian state, and even begins to be imbued, although very slowly, with respect for the government which protects all who work and is ruthless towards the idle rich.

The special conditions which in Russia complicated and retarded the struggle of the proletariat against the big peasants after it had defeated the bourgeoisie, were chiefly the following: the fact that after October 25 [November 7], 1917, the Russian revolution passed through a stage of "general-democratic," that is, basically, bourgeois-democratic, struggle of the peasantry as a whole against the landlords; the cultural and numerical weakness of the urban proletariat; and, finally, the enormous distances and extremely bad means of communication. Inasmuch as these retarding conditions do not exist in the advanced countries, the revolutionary proletariat of Europe and America should prepare far more energetically, and achieve far more quickly, resolutely and successfully, the complete vanquishment of the resistance of the big peasantry, completely depriving it of the slightest possibility of resisting. This is imperative, because until such a complete and absolute victory is achieved, the masses of the rural proletarians, semi-proletarians and small peasants cannot be fully brought to accept the proletarian state as a stable one.

6 The revolutionary proletariat must immediately and unreservedly confiscate all the land of the landlords, the big landowners, i e., those who in capitalist countries, directly or through their tenant farmers, systematically exploit wage labour and the surrounding small (and, not infrequently, part of the middle) peasantry, perform no manual labour themselves, and are largely the descendants of the feudal lords (the nobles in Russia, Germany and Hungary, the restored seigneurs in France, the lords in England, the ex slaveowners in America), or are very rich financial magnates, or a mixture of both these categories of exploiters and parasites

Under no circumstances must the Communist Parties advocate or practise compensating the big landowners for the lands expropriated from them, for under the conditions now prevailing in Europe and America this would be tantamount to a betrayal of Socialism and the imposition of new tribute upon the masses of toilers and exploited, upon whom the war has imposed most hardship, while multiplying the number of millionaires and enriching them.

As to the method by which the land that the victorious proletariat confiscates from the big landlords is to be cultivated, in Russia, owing to her economic backwardness, the predominating method was the distribution of this land among the peasantry for their use, and only in relatively rare and exceptional cases were there organized what are known as "Soviet farms," which the proletarian state runs for its own account, converting the former wage labourers into workers of the state and members of the Soviets which administer the state The Communist International is of the opinion that, in the case of the advanced capitalist countries, it would be correct to keep *most* of the big agricultural enterprises intact and to conduct them on the lines of the "Soviet farms" in Russia

It would be a great mistake, however, to exaggerate or to stereotype this rule and never to permit the free grant of part of the land expropriated from the expropriators to the surrounding small, and sometimes, middle peasantry

Firstly, the objection usually raised against this, *viz*, the technical superiority of large scale farming, very often amounts to citing an indisputable theoretical truth to justify the worst kind of opportunism and betrayal of the revolution For the sake of the success of this revolution, the proletariat has no right to shrink from a temporary decline in production, any more than the bourgeois enemies of slavery in North America shrank from a temporary decline in cotton production as a consequence of the Civil War of 1863-65 For the bourgeois, production is important for production's sake, for the toiling and exploited population, the most important thing is the over throw of the exploiters and the creation of conditions that will permit the toilers to work for themselves and not for the capitalists The primary and fundamental task of the proletar-

iat is to ensure the proletarian victory and its durability. And the durability of the proletarian government cannot be ensured unless the middle peasantry is neutralized and the support of a very considerable section, if not the whole, of the small peasantry is secured.

Secondly, not merely an increase, but even the preservation itself of large-scale production in agriculture presupposes the existence of a fully developed and consciously revolutionary rural proletariat with considerable experience of trade union and political organization behind them. Where this condition does not yet exist, or where it is not possible to entrust the work expediently to class-conscious and competent workers, hasty attempts at the introduction of large state-conducted farms may only discredit the proletarian government. Under such conditions, the utmost caution must be exercised and the most thorough preparation made before "Soviet farms" are set up.

Thirdly, in all capitalist countries, even the most advanced, there still exist survivals of mediaeval, semi-feudal exploitation by the big landowners of the surrounding small peasants, as in the case of the *Instleute* in Germany, the *métayers* in France, the share-croppers in the United States (not only Negroes, who, in the Southern states, are mostly exploited in this way, but sometimes whites too). In such cases it is incumbent on the proletarian state to grant the small peasants free use of the lands they formerly rented, for no other economic or technical basis exists, nor can it be created at one stroke.

The implements and stock of the big farms must be confiscated unreservedly and converted into state property, with the absolute proviso that *after* the requirements of the big state farms have been met, the surrounding small peasants may have the use of these implements gratis on terms to be drawn up by the proletarian state.

While, in the period immediately following the proletarian revolution, it is absolutely necessary, not only to confiscate the estates of the big landlords at once, but also to deport or to intern them as leaders of counter-revolution and ruthless oppressors of the whole rural population, as the proletarian power becomes consolidated in the countryside as well as in the cities, systematic efforts must be made to employ (under the special control of highly reliable Communist workers) the forces within this class possessing valuable experience, knowledge and organizing ability for the building up of large-scale Socialist agriculture.

7. The victory of Socialism over capitalism, and the consolidation of Socialism, may be regarded as ensured only when the proletarian state, having completely suppressed all resistance on the part of the exploiters and secured complete stability for itself and complete obedience, reorganizes the whole of industry on large-scale collective lines and on a modern technical basis (founded on the electrification of every branch of economic activity). This alone will enable the towns to render such radical assistance, technical and social, to the backward and scattered

rural population as will create the material basis for enormously raising the productivity of agricultural and of farm labour in general, thereby stimulating the small tillers by the force of example to adopt large-scale, collective, mechanized agriculture in their own interests This indisputable theoretical truth, although nominally admitted by all Socialists, is in fact distorted by the opportunism which prevails in the yellow Second International and among the leaders of the German and British "Independents," the French Longuetites, etc The distortion lies in the fact that attention is directed towards the relatively remote, beautiful and rosy future, attention is deflected from the immediate tasks involved in the difficult practical transition and approach to this future In practice, it consists in preaching compromise with the bourgeoisie and "social peace," that is, complete betrayal of the proletariat, which is now carrying on its fight amidst the unprecedented ruin and impoverishment created everywhere by the war, amidst the unprecedented enrichment and arrogance of a handful of millionaires resulting from the war

It is precisely in the rural districts that the creation of real opportunities for a successful struggle for Socialism demands, firstly, that all Communist Parties should educate the industrial proletariat to realize that it must make sacrifices, and inculcate a readiness in it to make sacrifices for the sake of overthrowing the bourgeoisie and of consolidating the proletarian power—for the dictatorship of the proletariat implies both the ability of the proletariat to organize and lead all the masses of toilers and exploited, and the ability of the vanguard to make the utmost sacrifice and to display the utmost heroism for this cause, secondly, success demands that the labouring and most highly exploited masses in the rural districts obtain as a result of the victory of the workers an immediate and considerable improvement in their conditions at the expense of the exploiters—for unless this is so, the industrial proletariat cannot be sure of the support of the rural districts, and, in particular, will be unable to ensure the supply of food to the towns.

8 The enormous difficulty of organizing and training for the revolutionary struggle the masses of the agricultural toilers, whom capitalism has reduced to a particular state of wretchedness, disunity, and, often, semi mediaeval dependence, makes it necessary for the Communist Parties to devote special attention to strike struggles in the rural districts, to give increased support to mass strikes among the agricultural proletarians and semi proletarians and to develop them in every way The experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and of 1917, now confirmed and broadened by the experience of Germany and other advanced countries, shows that the developing mass strike struggle (into which, under certain conditions, the small peasants can and should be drawn) is alone capable of rousing the countryside from its lethargy, of awakening the class consciousness of the exploited masses in the rural districts, of making them realize the need for class organization, and of revealing to them

in a vivid and practical manner the importance of their alliance with the urban workers.

This Congress of the Communist International brands as traitors those Socialists—unfortunately to be found not only in the yellow Second International, but also in the three very important European parties which have withdrawn from this International—who are not only capable of remaining indifferent to the strike struggle in the rural districts, but even (like K. Kautsky) of opposing it on the grounds that it creates the danger of a reduction in the output of articles of consumption. Neither programs nor solemn declarations are of any value whatever if it is not proved in practice, by deeds, that the Communists and workers' leaders are able to put the development of the proletarian revolution and its victory above everything else in the world, and to make the greatest sacrifices for it; for there is no other way out, no other salvation from starvation, ruin and new imperialist wars.

In particular, it should be pointed out that the leaders of the old Socialist movement and representatives of the "labour aristocracy," who now often make verbal concessions to Communism and even nominally side with it in order to maintain their prestige among the worker masses, now rapidly becoming revolutionary, must be tested for their loyalty to the cause of the proletariat and their suitability for responsible positions precisely in those spheres of work where the development of revolutionary consciousness and the revolutionary struggle is most marked, the resistance of the landowners and the bourgeoisie (the big peasants, kulaks) most fierce, and the difference between the Socialist compromiser and the Communist revolutionary most striking.

9. The Communist Parties must exert every effort to begin as speedily as possible to form Soviets of Deputies in the rural districts, in the first place, Soviets of hired labourers and semi-proletarians. Only if they are connected with the mass strike struggle and with the most oppressed class can the Soviets perform their functions and become consolidated enough to influence (and later to incorporate) the small peasants. If, however, the strike struggle is not yet developed, and the organizing ability of the agricultural proletariat still weak, owing both to the severity of the oppression of the landowners and big peasants and to lack of support from the industrial workers and their unions, the formation of Soviets of Deputies in the rural districts will require long preparation by means of the organization of Communist nuclei, even if small ones, intensified agitation—in which the demands of Communism are enunciated in the simplest manner and illustrated by the most glaring examples of exploitation and oppression—the arrangement of systematic visits of industrial workers to the rural districts, and so on.

Communist International No. 12,
July 20, 1920

ations which have arisen on the basis of the Soviet system and of the Soviet movement It being recognized that federation is a transitional form to complete union, it is necessary to strive for closer federal union, bearing in mind, firstly, that without the closest alliance between the Soviet Republics it will be impossible to preserve the existence of the Soviet Republics, surrounded as they are by the imperialist powers of the whole world—which from the military standpoint are immeasurably stronger than they, secondly, that a close economic alliance between the Soviet Republics is necessary, for without this it will be impossible to restore the productive forces that have been shattered by imperialism and to ensure the well being of the working people, and thirdly, that there is a tendency towards the creation of a single world economy as one whole, regulated by the proletariat of all nations according to a common plan, which tendency is already quite clearly revealed under capitalism and should certainly be further developed and fully consummated under Socialism

9 In the sphere of internal state relations, the national policy of the Communist International cannot be limited to the bare, formal, purely declaratory and in reality non committal recognition of the equality of nations to which the bourgeois democrats confine themselves—no matter whether they frankly admit themselves to be such or whether they use the name Socialists as a cloak, as, for example, the Socialists of the Second International do

Not only must the constant violation of the equality o nations and of the guaranteed rights of national minorities that takes place in all capitalist countries, despite their "democratic" constitutions, be consistently exposed in the whole propaganda and agitation of the Communist Parties—in parliament and out of parliament—but, firstly, it is necessary constantly to explain that the Soviet system is alone capable of granting real equality of nations, by uniting at first the proletarians and then the whole mass of the working population in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and, secondly, it is necessary that all Communist Parties render direct aid to the revolutionary movements among the dependent and subject nations (for example, in Ireland, among the Negroes of America, etc) and in the colonies

Without the latter condition, which is particularly important, the struggle against the oppression of the dependent nations and colonies, as well as the recognition of their rights to state separation are but a mendacious signboard, as we see in the case of the parties of the Second International

10 The recognition of internationalism in word, and the substitution of petty bourgeois nationalism and pacifism for it in deed, in propaganda, agitation and practical work, is a very common thing, not only among the parties of the Second International, but also among those which have withdrawn from that International, and often even among those which

now call themselves Communist Parties. The struggle against this evil, against these deeply rooted petty-bourgeois national prejudices, comes the more to the forefront, the more the task of transforming the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national one (*i.e.*, existing in one country and incapable of determining world politics) into an international one (*i.e.*, a dictatorship of the proletariat covering at least several advanced countries and capable of exercising decisive influence upon the whole of world politics) becomes an actual question of the day. Petty-bourgeois nationalism proclaims as internationalism the bare recognition of the equality of nations, and nothing more, while (quite apart from the fact that this recognition is purely verbal) preserving national egoism intact; whereas proletarian internationalism demands, firstly, that the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country be subordinated to the interests of the proletarian struggle on a world scale, and, secondly, *that a nation which is achieving victory over the bourgeoisie be able* and willing to make the greatest national sacrifices for the sake of overthrowing international capital.

Thus, in states which are already fully capitalistic, which have workers' parties that really act as the vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against the opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the concept and policy of internationalism is a primary and most important task.

11. With regard to the more backward states and nations, in which feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations predominate, it is particularly important to bear in mind:

First, that all Communist Parties must assist the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement in these countries, and that the duty of rendering the most active assistance rests primarily upon the workers of the country upon which the backward nation is dependent colonially or financially;

Second, that it is necessary to wage a fight against the clergy and other influential reactionary and mediaeval elements in backward countries;

Third, that it is necessary to combat Pan-Islamism and similar trends which strive to combine the liberation movement against European and American imperialism with the attempt to strengthen the positions of the khans, landlords, mullahs, etc.;

Fourth, that it is necessary in the backward countries to give special support to the peasant movement against the landlords, against large landownership, and against all manifestations or survivals of feudalism, and to strive to lend the peasant movement the most revolutionary character and establish the closest possible alliance between the West-European Communist proletariat and the revolutionary peasant movement in the East, in the colonies, and in the backward countries generally;

Fifth, that it is necessary to wage a determined struggle against the attempt to paint the bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries in Communist colours; the Communist International must support the bourgeois-democratic national movements in colonial and

backward countries only on condition that, in all backward countries, the elements of future proletarian parties which are Communist not only in name shall be grouped together and trained to appreciate their special tasks, *viz*, to fight the bourgeois democratic movements within their own nations, the Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in colonial and backward countries, but must not merge with it and must under all circumstances preserve the independence of the proletarian movement even if in its most rudimentary form,

Sixth, that it is necessary constantly to explain and expose among the broadest masses of the toilers of all countries, and particularly of the backward countries, the deception systematically practised by the imperialist powers in creating, under the guise of politically independent states, states which are wholly dependent upon them economically, financially and militarily, under modern international conditions there is no salvation for dependent and weak nations except in a union of Soviet republics

12 The age old oppression of colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist powers has not only filled the working masses of the oppressed countries with animosity towards the oppressing nations but also with distrust of them in general, even of the proletariat of those nations The despicable betrayal of Socialism by the majority of the official leaders of the proletariat of the oppressing nations in 1914-19, when "defence of the fatherland" was used as a social chauvinist cloak to conceal the defence of the "right" of "their" bourgeoisie to oppress colonies and rob financially dependent countries, could not but enhance this perfectly legitimate distrust On the other hand, the more backward a country is, the stronger is the hold within it of small agricultural production, patriarchalism and ignorance, which inevitably lend particular strength and tenacity to the deepest of petty-bourgeois prejudices, *viz*, national egoism and national narrowness As these prejudices can disappear only after imperialism and capitalism have disappeared in the advanced countries, and after the whole foundation of the economic life of the backward countries has radically changed, these prejudices cannot but die out very slowly It is therefore the duty of the class-conscious Communist proletariat of all countries to treat with particular caution and attention the survivals of national sentiments among the countries and nationalities which have been longest oppressed, and it is also necessary to make certain concessions with a view to hastening the extinction of the aforementioned distrust and prejudices Unless the proletariat, and, following it, all the toiling masses, of all countries and nations all over the world voluntarily strive for alliance and unity, the victory over capitalism cannot be successfully achieved

Communist International No 11,
June 14, 1920

THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The Second Congress of the Communist International ended on August 7. A little over a year has elapsed since its foundation, and during this brief interval vast and decisive successes have been achieved.

The First Congress, held a year ago, only unfurled the banner of Communism around which the forces of the revolutionary proletariat were to rally. War was declared on the Second, yellow International, which unites the social traitors who have sided with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat and are in alliance with the capitalists against the workers' revolution.

How great has been the success achieved in one year can be seen if only from the fact that the growing sympathy for Communism among the working masses has compelled some of the most important European and American parties to leave the Second International, namely, the French Socialist Party, the German and British "independent" parties, and the American independent party.

In every country of the world the finest representatives of the revolutionary workers already stand for Communism, the Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In all the advanced countries of Europe and America there are already Communist Parties or large Communist groups. And at the Congress which ended on August 7, there already foregathered not only the advance heralds of the proletarian revolution, but delegates from strong and powerful organizations connected with the proletarian masses. A world army of the revolutionary proletariat now stands for Communism, and, at the Congress just ended, it received organizational form and a clear, precise and detailed program of action.

The Congress declined to admit immediately to the Communist International parties whose ranks still retain influential representatives of "Menshevism," social treachery and opportunism, like the parties mentioned above which have left the Second, yellow International.

In a number of very definitely worded resolutions, the Congress closed every avenue to opportunism and demanded an unconditional break with it. And authentic data reported to the Congress show that the

working-class masses are with us, and that the opportunists will now be utterly vanquished.

The Congress corrected the mistakes committed in certain countries by Communists who were bent on going "Left" and who denied the need for working in bourgeois parliaments, reactionary trade unions, and wherever there are millions of workers still being fooled by the capitalists and their lackeys among the workers, that is, the members of the Second, yellow International.

The Congress has created a degree of unity and discipline among the Communist Parties of the world such as has never before existed and such as will permit the vanguard of the workers' revolution to march forward with giant strides to its great goal, the overthrow of the yoke of capital

The Congress will strengthen connections with the Communist women's movement, thanks to an international conference of working women held simultaneously.

Communist groups and Parties in the East, in the colonial countries and backward countries, which are so brutally robbed, oppressed and enslaved by the "civilized" alliance of the predatory nations, were likewise represented at the Congress. The revolutionary movement in the advanced countries would in practice be a sheer fraud if, in their struggle against capital, the workers of Europe and America were not closely and completely united with the hundreds upon hundreds of millions of "colonial" slaves who are oppressed by capital.

Great, indeed, are the military victories of the workers' and peasants' Soviet Republic over the landlords and capitalists, over Yudenich, Kolchak, Denikin, the Polish Whites and their confederates—France, England, America and Japan.

But greater still is our victory over the minds and hearts of the masses of the workers, of all who labour and are oppressed by capital—the victory of Communist ideas and Communist organizations all over the world.

The revolution of the proletariat for the overthrow of the yoke of capitalism, is marching on and will reach its goal in every country of the world.

Kommunistka No 3 4,
August September 1920

THE TASKS OF THE YOUTH LEAGUES

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE, OCTOBER 2, 1920

Comrades, I would like today to discuss the fundamental tasks of the Young Communist League and, in this connection, what the youth organizations in a Socialist republic should be like in general.

It is all the more necessary to deal with this question because in a certain sense it may be said that it is precisely the youth that will be faced with the real task of creating a Communist society. For it is clear that the generation of workers that was brought up in capitalist society can, at best, accomplish the task of destroying the foundations of the old, capitalist social life, which was based on exploitation. At best it can accomplish the task of creating a social system that would help the proletariat and the toiling classes to retain power and to lay a firm foundation, on which only the generation that is starting to work under the new conditions, conditions in which exploiting relations between men no longer exist, can build.

And so, in approaching the tasks of the youth from this angle, I must say that the tasks of the youth in general, and of the Young Communist League and all other organizations in particular, may be summed up in one word: learn.

Of course, this is only "one word." It does not answer the important and most essential questions: what to learn, and how to learn? And the whole point here is that with the transformation of the old capitalist society, the teaching, training and education of the new generations that will create the Communist society cannot be conducted on the old lines. The teaching, training and education of the youth must proceed from the material that was bequeathed to us by the old society. We can build Communism only from the sum of knowledge, organizations and institutions, only with the stock of human forces and means that were bequeathed to us by the old society. Only by radically remoulding the teaching, organization and training of the youth shall we be able to ensure that the result of the efforts of the younger generation will be the creation of a society that will be unlike the old society, *i.e.*, a Communist society.

working-class masses are with us, and that the opportunists will now be utterly vanquished.

The Congress corrected the mistakes committed in certain countries by Communists who were bent on going "Left" and who denied the need for working in bourgeois parliaments, reactionary trade unions, and wherever there are millions of workers still being fooled by the capitalists and their lackeys among the workers, that is, the members of the Second, yellow International.

The Congress has created a degree of unity and discipline among the Communist Parties of the world such as has never before existed and such as will permit the vanguard of the workers' revolution to march forward with giant strides to its great goal, the overthrow of the yoke of capital.

The Congress will strengthen connections with the Communist women's movement, thanks to an international conference of working women held simultaneously.

Communist groups and Parties in the East, in the colonial countries and backward countries, which are so brutally robbed, oppressed and enslaved by the "civilized" alliance of the predatory nations, were likewise represented at the Congress. The revolutionary movement in the advanced countries would in practice be a sheer fraud if, in their struggle against capital, the workers of Europe and America were not closely and completely united with the hundreds upon hundreds of millions of "colonial" slaves who are oppressed by capital.

Great, indeed, are the military victories of the workers' and peasants' Soviet Republic over the landlords and capitalists, over Yudenich, Kolchak, Denikin, the Polish Whites and their confederates—France, England, America and Japan.

But greater still is our victory over the minds and hearts of the masses of the workers, of all who labour and are oppressed by capital—the victory of Communist ideas and Communist organizations all over the world.

The revolution of the proletariat for the overthrow of the yoke of capitalism, is marching on and will reach its goal in every country of the world

Kommunistka No 3 4,
August September 1920

THE TASKS OF THE YOUTH LEAGUES

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE, OCTOBER 2, 1920

Comrades, I would like today to discuss the fundamental tasks of the Young Communist League and, in this connection, what the youth organizations in a Socialist republic should be like in general.

It is all the more necessary to deal with this question because in a certain sense it may be said that it is precisely the youth that will be faced with the real task of creating a Communist society. For it is clear that the generation of workers that was brought up in capitalist society can, at best, accomplish the task of destroying the foundations of the old, capitalist social life, which was based on exploitation. At best it can accomplish the task of creating a social system that would help the proletariat and the toiling classes to retain power and to lay a firm foundation, on which only the generation that is starting to work under the new conditions, conditions in which exploiting relations between men no longer exist, can build.

And so, in approaching the tasks of the youth from this angle, I must say that the tasks of the youth in general, and of the Young Communist League and all other organizations in particular, may be summed up in one word: learn.

Of course, this is only "one word." It does not answer the important and most essential questions: what to learn, and how to learn? And the whole point here is that with the transformation of the old capitalist society, the teaching, training and education of the new generations that will create the Communist society cannot be conducted on the old lines. The teaching, training and education of the youth must proceed from the material that was bequeathed to us by the old society. We can build Communism only from the sum of knowledge, organizations and institutions, only with the stock of human forces and means that were bequeathed to us by the old society. Only by radically remoulding the teaching, organization and training of the youth shall we be able to ensure that the result of the efforts of the younger generation will be the creation of a society that will be unlike the old society, *i.e.*, a Communist society.

That is why we must deal in detail with the question of what we should teach the youth and how the youth should learn if it really wants to justify the name of Communist youth, and how it should be trained so as to be able to complete and perfect what we have started

I must say that the first and most natural reply would seem to be that the Youth League, and the youth that wants to pass to Communism as a whole, should learn Communism.

But this reply—"learn Communism"—is too general What do we need in order to learn Communism? What must be singled out from the sum of general knowledge to acquire a knowledge of Communism? Here a number of dangers arise, which often confront us when the task of learning Communism is presented incorrectly, or when it is interpreted too one sidedly.

Naturally, the first thought that enters one's mind is that learning Communism means imbibing the sum of knowledge that is contained in Communist textbooks, pamphlets and books But such a definition of the study of Communism would be too crude and inadequate

If the study of Communism consisted solely in imbibing what is contained in Communist books and pamphlets, we might all too easily obtain Communist text jugglers or braggarts, and this would very often cause us harm and damage, because such people, having learned by rote what is contained in Communist books and pamphlets would be incapable of combining this knowledge, and would be unable to act in the way Communism really demands.

One of the greatest evils and misfortunes bequeathed to us by the old capitalist society is the complete divorcement of books from practical life, for we have had books in which everything was described in the best possible manner, yet these books in the majority of cases were most disgusting and hypocritical lies that described Communist society falsely That is why the mere routine absorption of what is written in books about Communism would be extremely wrong

In our speeches and articles we do not now merely repeat what was formerly said about Communism, because our speeches and articles are connected with daily, all round work Without work, without struggle, a routine knowledge of Communism obtained from Communist pamphlets and books would be worthless, for it would continue the old divorcement of theory from practice, that old divorcement which constituted the most disgusting feature of the old bourgeois society

It would be still more dangerous to start to imbibe only Communist slogans If we did not realize this danger in time, and if we did not direct all our efforts to avert this danger, the half million or million boys and girls who called themselves Communists after studying Communism in this way would only occasion great damage to the cause of Communism

Here the question arises how should we combine all this for the study

of Communism? What must we take from the old school, from the old science?

The old school declared that its aim was to create men with an all-round education, to teach the sciences in general. We know that this was utterly false, for the whole of society was based and maintained on the division of men into classes, into exploiters and oppressed. Naturally, the old school, being thoroughly imbued with the class spirit, imparted knowledge only to the children of the bourgeoisie. Every word was falsified in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

In these schools the younger generation of workers and peasants were not so much educated as drilled in the interests of this bourgeoisie. They were trained to be useful servants of the bourgeoisie, able to create profits for it without disturbing its peace and leisure. That is why, while rejecting the old school, we have made it our task to take from it only what we require for real Communist education.

This brings me to the reproaches and accusations which we constantly hear levelled at the old school, and which often lead to totally wrong conclusions.

It is said that the old school was a school of cramming, grinding, learning by rote. That is true; nevertheless, we must distinguish between what was bad in the old school and what is useful for us, and we must be able to choose from it what is necessary for Communism.

The old school was a school of cramming; it compelled pupils to imbibe a mass of useless, superfluous, barren knowledge, which clogged the brain and transformed the younger generation into officials turned out to pattern. But you would be committing a great mistake if you attempted to draw the conclusion that one can become a Communist without acquiring what human knowledge has accumulated. It would be a mistake to think that it is enough to learn Communist slogans, the conclusions of Communist science, without acquiring the sum of knowledge of which Communism itself is a consequence.

Marxism is an example of how Communism arose out of the sum of human knowledge.

You have read and heard that Communist theory, the science of Communism, mainly created by Marx, that this doctrine of Marxism has ceased to be the product of a single Socialist of the nineteenth century, even though he was a genius, and that it has become the doctrine of millions and tens of millions of proletarians all over the world, who are applying this doctrine in their struggle against capitalism.

And if you were to ask why the doctrines of Marx were able to capture the hearts of millions and tens of millions of the most revolutionary class, you would receive only one answer: it was because Marx took his stand on the firm foundation of the human knowledge acquired under capitalism. Having studied the laws of development of human society, Marx realized that the development of capitalism was inevitably leading

to Communism. And the principal thing is that he proved this only on the basis of the most exact, most detailed and most profound study of this capitalist society, and this he was able to do because he had fully assimilated all that earlier science had taught.

He critically reshaped everything that had been created by human society, not ignoring a single point. He reshaped everything that had been created by human thought, criticized it, tested it on the working-class movement, and drew conclusions which people restricted by bourgeois limits or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw.

This is what we must bear in mind when, for example, we talk about proletarian culture. Unless we clearly understand that only by an exact knowledge of the culture created by the whole development of mankind and that only by reshaping this culture can a proletarian culture be built, we shall not be able to solve this problem

Proletarian culture is not something that has sprung nobody knows whence, it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the result of a natural development of the stores of knowledge which mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist society, landlord society and bureaucratic society.

All these roads and paths have led, are leading, and continue to lead to proletarian culture, in the same way as political economy, reshaped by Marx, showed us what human society must come to, showed us the transition to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we so often hear representatives of the youth and certain advocates of a new system of education attacking the old school and saying that it was a school of cramming, we say to them that we must take what was good from the old school.

We must not take from the old school the system of loading young people's minds with an immense amount of knowledge, nine-tenths of which was useless and one-tenth distorted. But this does not mean that we can confine ourselves to Communist conclusions and learn only Communist slogans. You will not create Communism that way. You can become a Communist only by enriching your mind with the knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind.

We do not need cramming, but we do need to develop and perfect the mind of every student by a knowledge of the principal facts. For Communism would become a void, a mere signboard, and a Communist would become a mere braggart, *if all the knowledge he has obtained were not* digested in his mind. You must not only assimilate this knowledge, you must assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the modern man of education.

If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his Communism because of the ready-made conclusions he had acquired, without putting

in a great deal of serious and hard work, without understanding the facts which he must examine critically, he would be a very deplorable Communist. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need know nothing thoroughly, he will never be anything like a Communist.

The old school turned out servants needed by the capitalists; the old school transformed men of science into men who had to write and say what pleased the capitalists. Therefore we must abolish it. But does the fact that we must abolish it, destroy it, mean that we must not take from it all that mankind has accumulated for the benefit of man?

Does it mean that it is not our duty to distinguish between what was necessary for capitalism and what is necessary for Communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods that were employed in bourgeois society in opposition to the will of the majority by the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with the determination, ability and readiness to unite and organize their forces for this fight, in order to transform the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people, disunited, dispersed and scattered over the territory of a huge country, into a single will; for without this single will we shall inevitably be defeated. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause will be hopeless. Without this we shall be unable to beat the capitalists and landlords of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new Communist society on this foundation.

Similarly, while rejecting the old school, while cherishing a legitimate and essential hatred for the old school, while prizing the readiness to destroy the old school, we must realize that in place of the old system of tuition, in place of the old cramming system, the old drill system, we must put the ability to take the sum of human knowledge, and to take it in such a way that Communism shall not be something learned by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, that it shall consist of the conclusions which are inevitable from the standpoint of modern education.

That is the way we must present the main tasks when speaking of the task of learning Communism.

In order to explain this to you, and as an approach to the question of how to learn, I shall take a practical example. You all know that following after the military tasks, the tasks connected with the defence of the republic, we are now being confronted with economic tasks.

We know that Communist society cannot be built up unless we regenerate industry and agriculture, and these must not be regenerated in the old way. They must be regenerated on a modern basis, in accordance with the last word in science. You know that this dasis is electricity, and

to Communism. And the principal thing is that he proved this only on the basis of the most exact, most detailed and most profound study of this capitalist society; and this he was able to do because he had fully assimilated all that earlier science had taught.

He critically reshaped everything that had been created by human society, not ignoring a single point. He reshaped everything that had been created by human thought, criticized it, tested it on the working-class movement, and drew conclusions which people restricted by bourgeois limits or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw.

This is what we must bear in mind when, for example, we talk about proletarian culture. Unless we clearly understand that only by an exact knowledge of the culture created by the whole development of mankind and that only by reshaping this culture can a proletarian culture be built, we shall not be able to solve this problem.

Proletarian culture is not something that has sprung nobody knows whence, it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the result of a natural development of the stores of knowledge which mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist society, landlord society and bureaucratic society.

All these roads and paths have led, are leading, and continue to lead to proletarian culture, in the same way as political economy, reshaped by Marx, showed us what human society must come to, showed us the transition to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we so often hear representatives of the youth and certain advocates of a new system of education attacking the old school and saying that it was a school of cramming, we say to them that we must take what was good from the old school.

We must not take from the old school the system of loading young people's minds with an immense amount of knowledge, nine-tenths of which was useless and one-tenth distorted. But this does not mean that we can confine ourselves to Communist conclusions and learn only Communist slogans You will not create Communism that way. You can become a Communist only by enriching your mind with the knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind.

We do not need cramming, but we do need to develop and perfect the mind of every student by a knowledge of the principal facts. For Communism would become a void, a mere signboard, and a Communist would become a mere braggart, if all the knowledge he has obtained were not digested in his mind. You must not only assimilate this knowledge, you must assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the modern man of education.

If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his Communism because of the ready-made conclusions he had acquired, without putting

in a great deal of serious and hard work, without understanding the facts which he must examine critically, he would be a very deplorable Communist. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need know nothing thoroughly, he will never be anything like a Communist.

The old school turned out servants needed by the capitalists; the old school transformed men of science into men who had to write and say what pleased the capitalists. Therefore we must abolish it. But does the fact that we must abolish it, destroy it, mean that we must not take from it all that mankind has accumulated for the benefit of man?

Does it mean that it is not our duty to distinguish between what was necessary for capitalism and what is necessary for Communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods that were employed in bourgeois society in opposition to the will of the majority by the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with the determination, ability and readiness to unite and organize their forces for this fight, in order to transform the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people, disunited, dispersed and scattered over the territory of a huge country, into a single will; for without this single will we shall inevitably be defeated. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause will be hopeless. Without this we shall be unable to beat the capitalists and landlords of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new Communist society on this foundation.

Similarly, while rejecting the old school, while cherishing a legitimate and essential hatred for the old school, while prizing the readiness to destroy the old school, we must realize that in place of the old system of tuition, in place of the old cramming system, the old drill system, we must put the ability to take the sum of human knowledge, and to take it in such a way that Communism shall not be something learned by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, that it shall consist of the conclusions which are inevitable from the standpoint of modern education.

That is the way we must present the main tasks when speaking of the task of learning Communism.

In order to explain this to you, and as an approach to the question of how to learn, I shall take a practical example. You all know that following after the military tasks, the tasks connected with the defence of the republic, we are now being confronted with economic tasks.

We know that Communist society cannot be built up unless we regenerate industry and agriculture, and these must not be regenerated in the old way. They must be regenerated on a modern basis, in accordance with the last word in science. You know that this dasis is electricity, and

to Communism. And the principal thing is that he proved this only on the basis of the most exact, most detailed and most profound study of this capitalist society, and this he was able to do because he had fully assimilated all that earlier science had taught.

He critically reshaped everything that had been created by human society, not ignoring a single point He reshaped everything that had been created by human thought, criticized it, tested it on the working-class movement, and drew conclusions which people restricted by bourgeois limits or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw.

This is what we must bear in mind when, for example, we talk about proletarian culture Unless we clearly understand that only by an exact knowledge of the culture created by the whole development of mankind and that only by reshaping this culture can a proletarian culture be built, we shall not be able to solve this problem

Proletarian culture is not something that has sprung nobody knows whence, it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense Proletarian culture must be the result of a natural development of the stores of knowledge which mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist society, landlord society and bureaucratic society

All these roads and paths have led, are leading, and continue to lead to proletarian culture, in the same way as political economy, reshaped by Marx, showed us what human society must come to, showed us the transition to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we so often hear representatives of the youth and certain advocates of a new system of education attacking the old school and saying that it was a school of cramming, we say to them that we must take what was good from the old school.

We must not take from the old school the system of loading young people's minds with an immense amount of knowledge, nine-tenths of which was useless and one-tenth distorted But this does not mean that we can confine ourselves to Communist conclusions and learn only Communist slogans You will not create Communism that way. You can become a Communist only by enriching your mind with the knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind

We do not need cramming, but we do need to develop and perfect the mind of every student by a knowledge of the principal facts. For Communism would become a void, a mere signboard, and a Communist would become a mere braggart, if all the knowledge he has obtained were not digested in his mind You must not only assimilate this knowledge, you must assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the modern man of education.

If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his Communism because of the ready-made conclusions he had acquired without putting

in a great deal of serious and hard work, without understanding the facts which he must examine critically, he would be a very deplorable Communist. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need know nothing thoroughly, he will never be anything like a Communist.

The old school turned out servants needed by the capitalists; the old school transformed men of science into men who had to write and say what pleased the capitalists. Therefore we must abolish it. But does the fact that we must abolish it, destroy it, mean that we must not take from it all that mankind has accumulated for the benefit of man?

Does it mean that it is not our duty to distinguish between what was necessary for capitalism and what is necessary for Communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods that were employed in bourgeois society in opposition to the will of the majority by the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with the *determination*, ability and *readiness to unite* and organize their forces for this fight, in order to transform the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people, disunited, dispersed and scattered over the territory of a huge country, into a single will; for without this single will we shall inevitably be defeated. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause will be hopeless. Without this we shall be unable to beat the capitalists and landlords of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new Communist society on this foundation.

Similarly, while rejecting the old school, while cherishing a legitimate and essential hatred for the old school, while prizing the readiness to destroy the old school, we must realize that in place of the old system of tuition, in place of the old cramming system, the old drill system, we must put the ability to take the sum of human knowledge, and to take it in such a way that Communism shall not be something learned by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, that it shall consist of the conclusions which are inevitable from the standpoint of modern education.

That is the way we must present the main tasks when speaking of the task of learning Communism.

In order to explain this to you, and as an approach to the question of how to learn, I shall take a practical example. You all know that following after the military tasks, the tasks connected with the defence of the republic, we are now being confronted with economic tasks.

We know that Communist society cannot be built up unless we regenerate industry and agriculture, and these must not be regenerated in the old way. They must be regenerated on a modern basis, in accordance with the last word in science. You know that this dasis is electricity, and

to Communism. And the principal thing is that he proved this only on the basis of the most exact, most detailed and most profound study of this capitalist society, and this he was able to do because he had fully assimilated all that earlier science had taught.

He critically reshaped everything that had been created by human society, not ignoring a single point He reshaped everything that had been created by human thought, criticized it, tested it on the working-class movement, and drew conclusions which people restricted by bourgeois limits or bound by bourgeois prejudices could not draw.

This is what we must bear in mind when, for example, we talk about proletarian culture Unless we clearly understand that only by an exact knowledge of the culture created by the whole development of mankind and that only by reshaping this culture can a proletarian culture be built, we shall not be able to solve this problem.

Proletarian culture is not something that has sprung nobody knows whence, it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the result of a natural development of the stores of knowledge which mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist society, landlord society and bureaucratic society

All these roads and paths have led, are leading, and continue to lead to proletarian culture, in the same way as political economy, reshaped by Marx, showed us what human society must come to, showed us the transition to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we so often hear representatives of the youth and certain advocates of a new system of education attacking the old school and saying that it was a school of cramming, we say to them that we must take what was good from the old school

We must not take from the old school the system of loading young people's minds with an immense amount of knowledge, nine-tenths of which was useless and one-tenth distorted. But this does not mean that we can confine ourselves to Communist conclusions and learn only Communist slogans You will not create Communism that way. You can become a Communist only by enriching your mind with the knowledge of all the treasures created by mankind.

We do not need cramming, but we do need to develop and perfect the mind of every student by a knowledge of the principal facts. For Communism would become a void, a mere signboard, and a Communist would become a mere braggart, if all the knowledge he has obtained were not digested in his mind. You must not only assimilate this knowledge, you must assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the modern man of education.

If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his Communism because of the ready-made conclusions he had acquired, without putting

in a great deal of serious and hard work, without understanding the facts which he must examine critically, he would be a very deplorable Communist. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need know nothing thoroughly, he will never be anything like a Communist.

The old school turned out servants needed by the capitalists; the old school transformed men of science into men who had to write and say what pleased the capitalists. Therefore we must abolish it. But does the fact that we must abolish it, destroy it, mean that we must not take from it all that mankind has accumulated for the benefit of man?

Does it mean that it is not our duty to distinguish between what was necessary for capitalism and what is necessary for Communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods that were employed in bourgeois society in opposition to the will of the majority by the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with the determination, ability and readiness to unite and organize their forces for this fight, in order to transform the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people, disunited, dispersed and scattered over the territory of a huge country, into a single will; for without this single will we shall inevitably be defeated. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause will be hopeless. Without this we shall be unable to beat the capitalists and landlords of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new Communist society on this foundation.

Similarly, while rejecting the old school, while cherishing a legitimate and essential hatred for the old school, while prizing the readiness to destroy the old school, we must realize that in place of the old system of tuition, in place of the old cramming system, the old drill system, we must put the ability to take the sum of human knowledge, and to take it in such a way that Communism shall not be something learned by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, that it shall consist of the conclusions which are inevitable from the standpoint of modern education.

That is the way we must present the main tasks when speaking of the task of learning Communism.

In order to explain this to you, and as an approach to the question of how to learn, I shall take a practical example. You all know that following after the military tasks, the tasks connected with the defence of the republic, we are now being confronted with economic tasks.

We know that Communist society cannot be built up unless we regenerate industry and agriculture, and these must not be regenerated in the old way. They must be regenerated on a modern basis, in accordance with the last word in science. You know that this dasis is electricity and

that only when the whole country, all branches of industry and agriculture have been electrified, only when you have mastered this task will you be able to build up for yourselves the Communist society which the older generation cannot build up.

We are confronted with the task of economically regenerating the whole country, of reorganizing and restoring both agriculture and industry on a modern technical basis which rests on modern science and technology, on electricity.

You realize perfectly well that illiterate people cannot tackle electrification, and even mere literacy is not enough It is not enough to understand what electricity is, it is necessary to know how to apply it technically to industry and to agriculture, and to the various branches of industry and agriculture We must learn this ourselves, and must teach it to the whole of the younger generation of toilers

This is the task that confronts every class-conscious Communist, every young person who regards himself as a Communist and who clearly understands that by joining the Young Communist League he has pledged himself to help the Party to build Communism and to help the whole younger generation to create a Communist society He must realize that *he can create it only on the basis of modern education, and if he does not* acquire this education Communism will remain a pious wish

The task of the old generation was to overthrow the bourgeoisie The main task in their day was to criticize the bourgeoisie, to arouse hatred of the bourgeoisie among the masses, to develop class consciousness and the ability to unite their forces

The new generation is confronted with a much more complicated task Not only have you to combine all your forces to uphold the power of the workers and peasants against the attacks of the capitalists That you must do That you have clearly understood and it is distinctly perceived by every Communist But it is not enough

You must build up a Communist society In many respects the first half of the work has been done The old order has been destroyed, as it deserved to be, it has been transformed into a heap of ruins, as it deserved to be The ground has been cleared, and on this ground the young Communist generation must build a Communist society.

You are faced with the task of construction, and you can cope with it only by mastering all modern knowledge, only if you are able to transform Communism from ready made, memorized formulas, counsels, recipes, prescriptions and programs into that living thing which unites your immediate work, and only if you are able to transform Communism into a guide for your practical work

This is the task by which you should be guided in educating, training and rousing the whole of the younger generation You must be the foremost among the millions of builders of Communist society, which every young man and young woman should be.

Unless you enlist the whole mass of young workers and peasants in the work of building Communism, you will not build a Communist society.

This naturally brings me to the question how we should teach Communism and what the specific features of our methods should be.

Here, first of all, I will deal with the question of Communist ethics.

You must train yourselves to be Communists. The task of the Youth League is to organize its practical activities in such a way that, by learning, organizing, uniting and fighting, its members should train themselves and all who look to it as a leader, it should train Communists. The whole object of training, educating and teaching the youth of today should be to imbue them with Communist ethics.

But is there such a thing as Communist ethics? Is there such a thing as Communist morality? Of course, there is. It is often made to appear that we have no ethics of our own; and very often the bourgeoisie accuse us Communists of repudiating all ethics. This is a method of shuffling concepts, of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we repudiate ethics and morality?

In the sense that it is preached by the bourgeoisie, who derived ethics from God's commandments. We, of course, say that we do not believe in God, and that we know perfectly well that the clergy, the landlords and the bourgeoisie spoke in the name of God in pursuit of their own interests as exploiters. Or instead of deriving ethics from the commandments of morality, from the commandments of God, they derived them from idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's commandments.

We repudiate all morality derived from non-human and non-class concepts. We say that it is a deception, a fraud, a befogging of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landlords and capitalists.

We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morality is derived from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

The old society was based on the oppression of the workers and peasants by the landlords and capitalists. We had to destroy this, we had to overthrow them; but for this we had to create unity. God will not create such unity.

This unity could be created only by factories and workshops, only by the proletariat, trained and roused from its long slumber. Only when that class was formed did the mass movement begin which led to what we see now—the victory of the proletarian revolution in one of the weakest of countries, which for three years has been resisting the onslaught of the bourgeoisie of the whole world.

And we see that the proletarian revolution is growing all over the world. We now say, on the basis of experience, that only the proletariat

could have created that compact force which the disunited and scattered peasantry are following and which has withstood all the onslaughts of the exploiters. Only this class can help the toiling masses to unite, rally their ranks and definitely defend, definitely consolidate and definitely build up Communist society.

That is why we say that for us there is no such thing as morality apart from human society, it is a fraud. Morality for us is subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

What does this class struggle mean? It means overthrowing the tsar, overthrowing the capitalists, abolishing the capitalist class.

And what are classes in general? Classes are what permits one section of society to appropriate the labour of the other section.

If one section of society appropriates all the land, we have a landlord class and a peasant class. If one section of society possesses the mills and factories, shares and capital, while another section works in these factories, we have a capitalist class and a proletarian class.

It was not difficult to drive out the tsar—that required only a few days. It was not very difficult to drive out the landlords—that was done in a few months. Nor was it very difficult to drive out the capitalists.

But it is incomparably more difficult to abolish classes; we still have the division into workers and peasants. If the peasant is settled on his separate plot of land and appropriates superfluous grain, that is, grain that he does not need for himself or for his cattle, while the rest of the people have to go without bread, then the peasant becomes an exploiter. The more grain he clings to, the more profitable he finds it, as for the rest, let them starve. He says to himself: "The more they starve the dearer I can sell this grain."

Everybody must work according to a common plan, on common land, in common mills and factories and under common management. Is it easy to bring this about? You see that it is not as easy as driving out the tsar, the landlords and the capitalists. In order to achieve this the proletariat must re-educate, re-train a section of the peasantry, it must win over to its side those who are toiling peasants, in order to crush the resistance of those peasants who are rich and are profiting by the poverty and want of the rest.

Hence the task of the proletarian struggle is not completed by the fact that we have overthrown the tsar and have driven out the landlords and capitalists, and its completion is the task of the system we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The class struggle is still continuing, it has merely changed its forms. It is the class struggle of the proletariat to prevent the return of the old exploiters, to unite the scattered masses of unenlightened peasants into one union. The class struggle is continuing and it is our task to subordinate all interests to this struggle.

And we subordinate our Communist morality to this task. We say: morality is what serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the toilers around the proletariat, which is creating a new, Communist society.

Communist morality is the morality which serves this struggle, which unites the toilers against all exploitation, against all small property; for small property puts into the hands of one person what has been created by the labour of the whole of society.

The land in our country is common property.

But suppose I take a piece of this common property and grow on it twice as much grain as I need and profiteer in the surplus? Suppose I argue that the more starving people there are the more they will pay? Would I then be behaving like a Communist?

No, I would be behaving like an exploiter, like a proprietor. This must be combated.

If this is allowed to go on we shall slide back to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of the bourgeoisie, as has more than once happened in previous revolutions. And in order to prevent the restoration of the rule of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie we must not allow profiteering, we must not allow individuals to enrich themselves at the expense of the rest, and all the toilers must unite with the proletariat and form a Communist society.

This is the principal feature of the fundamental task of the League and of the organizations of the Communist youth.

The old society was based on the principle: rob or be robbed, work for others or make others work for you, be a slaveowner or a slave. Naturally, people brought up in such a society imbibe with their mother's milk, so to speak, the psychology, the habit, the concept: you are either a slaveowner or a slave or else, a small owner, a small employee, a small official, an intellectual—in short, a man who thinks only of himself, and doesn't give a hang for anybody else.

If I work this plot of land, I don't give a hang for anybody else; if others starve, all the better, the more I will get for my grain. If I have a job as a doctor, engineer, teacher, or clerk, I don't give a hang for anybody else. Perhaps if I toady to and please the powers that be I shall keep my job, and even get on in life and become a bourgeois. A Communist cannot have such a psychology and such sentiments.

When the workers and peasants proved that they were able by their own efforts to defend themselves and create a new society, a new Communist training began, a training in fighting the exploiters, a training in forming an alliance with the proletariat against the self-seekers and small owners, against the psychology and habits which say: I seek my own profit and I don't give a hang for anything else.

This is the reply to the question how the young and rising generation should learn Communism.

workers to this work The younger generation itself must take up this work

Communism consists in the youth, the young men and women who belong to the Youth League, saying This is our job, we shall unite and go into the rural districts to abolish illiteracy, so that there shall be no illiterates among our rising generation We are trying to get the rising generation to devote its activities to this work

You know that it will not be possible to transform ignorant, illiterate Russia into a literate country quickly. But if the Youth League sets to work on this job, if all the young people work for the benefit of all, the League, which has a membership of 400,000 young men and women, will be entitled to call itself a Young Communist League Another task of the League is, after having acquired any particular knowledge, to help those young people who cannot liberate themselves from the darkness of illiteracy by their own efforts

Being a member of the Youth League means devoting one's labour and efforts to the common cause That is what Communist training means Only in the course of such work does a young man or woman become a real Communist Only in this way, only if they achieve practical results in this work will they become Communists

Take, for example, work on the suburban vegetable gardens This is one of the duties of the Young Communist League The people are starving, there is starvation in the mills and factories In order to save ourselves from starvation, vegetable gardens must be developed But agriculture is being carried on in the old way

Therefore, more class conscious elements should undertake this work, and you would then find that the number of vegetable gardens would increase, their area grow, and the results improve The Young Communist League should take an active part in this work Every League and every branch of the League should regard this as its job

The Young Communist League should be a shock group, helping in every job and displaying initiative and enterprise The League should be such that any worker may see that it consists of people whose doctrines he may not understand, whose doctrines he perhaps may not immediately believe, but whose practical work and activity prove to him that they are really the people who are showing him the right road

If the Young Communist League fails to organize its work in this way in all fields, it will show that it is slipping into the old bourgeois road

We must combine our training with the struggle of the toilers against the exploiters in order to help the former to perform the tasks that follow from the doctrines of Communism

The members of the League should spend every spare hour in improving the vegetable gardens, or in organizing the education of young people in some mill or factory, and so forth

We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into a wealthy country. And the Young Communist League must combine its education, teaching and training with the labour of the workers and peasants, so as not to shut itself up in its schools and confine itself to reading Communist books and pamphlets.

Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants can one become a genuine Communist.

And everyone must be made to see that all those who belong to the Youth League are literate and at the same time know how to work. When everyone sees that we have driven the old drill methods from the old school and have replaced them by conscious discipline, that all young men and women are taking part in subbotniks, that they are utilizing every suburban farm to help the population—the people will cease to look upon labour as they looked upon it before.

It is the task of the Young Communist League to organize assistance in village and city block in such a matter as—I take a small example—cleanliness and the distribution of food.

How was this done in the old capitalist society?

Everybody worked for himself alone, and nobody cared whether there were aged or sick, or whether all the housework fell on the shoulders of the women, who, as a result, were in a condition of oppression and slavery. Whose business is it to combat this? It is the business of the Youth Leagues, which must say: We shall change all this; we shall organize detachments of young people who will help to maintain cleanliness or to distribute food, who will make systematic house-to-house inspections, who will work in an organized way for the benefit of the whole of society, properly distributing their forces and demonstrating that labour must be organized labour.

The generation which is now about fifty years old cannot expect to see the Communist society. This generation will die out before then.

But the generation which is now fifteen years old will see the Communist society, and will itself build this society.

And it must realize that the whole purpose of its life is to build this society.

In the old society work was carried on by separate families, and nobody united their labour except the landlords and capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organize all labour, no matter how dirty and arduous it may be, in such a way that every worker and peasant may say: I am part of the great army of free labour, and I can build up my life without the landlords and capitalists, I can establish the Communist system.

The Young Communist League must train everybody to conscious and disciplined labour while they are still young, from the age of twelve.

That is what will enable us to count on the problems that are now confronting us being solved.

workers to this work The younger generation itself must take up this work

Communism consists in the youth, the young men and women who belong to the Youth League, saying This is our job, we shall unite and go into the rural districts to abolish illiteracy, so that there shall be no illiterates among our rising generation We are trying to get the rising generation to devote its activities to this work

You know that it will not be possible to transform ignorant, illiterate Russia into a literate country quickly But if the Youth League sets to work on this job, if all the young people work for the benefit of all, the League, which has a membership of 400,000 young men and women, will be entitled to call itself a Young Communist League Another task of the League is, after having acquired any particular knowledge, to help those young people who cannot liberate themselves from the darkness of illiteracy by their own efforts

Being a member of the Youth League means devoting one's labour and efforts to the common cause That is what Communist training means Only in the course of such work does a young man or woman become a real Communist Only in this way, only if they achieve practical results in this work will they become Communists

Take, for example, work on the suburban vegetable gardens This is one of the duties of the Young Communist League The people are starving, there is starvation in the mills and factories In order to save ourselves from starvation, vegetable gardens must be developed But agriculture is being carried on in the old way

Therefore, more class conscious elements should undertake this work, and you would then find that the number of vegetable gardens would increase, their area grow, and the results improve The Young Communist League should take an active part in this work Every League and every branch of the League should regard this as its job

The Young Communist League should be a shock group, helping in every job and displaying initiative and enterprise The League should be such that any worker may see that it consists of people whose doctrines he may not understand, whose doctrines he perhaps may not immediately believe, but whose practical work and activity prove to him that they are really the people who are showing him the right road

If the Young Communist League fails to organize its work in this way in all fields, it will show that it is slipping into the old bourgeois road

We must combine our training with the struggle of the toilers against the exploiters in order to help the former to perform the tasks that follow from the doctrines of Communism

The members of the League should spend every spare hour in improving the vegetable gardens, or in organizing the education of young people in some mill or factory, and so forth

We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into a wealthy country. And the Young Communist League must combine its education, teaching and training with the labour of the workers and peasants, so as not to shut itself up in its schools and confine itself to reading Communist books and pamphlets.

Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants can one become a genuine Communist.

And everyone must be made to see that all those who belong to the Youth League are literate and at the same time know how to work. When everyone sees that we have driven the old drill methods from the old school and have replaced them by conscious discipline, that all young men and women are taking part in subbotniks, that they are utilizing every suburban farm to help the population—the people will cease to look upon labour as they looked upon it before.

It is the task of the Young Communist League to organize assistance in village and city block in such a matter as—I take a small example—cleanliness and the distribution of food.

How was this done in the old capitalist society?

Everybody worked for himself alone, and nobody cared whether there were aged or sick, or whether all the housework fell on the shoulders of the women, who, as a result, were in a condition of oppression and slavery. Whose business is it to combat this? It is the business of the Youth Leagues, which must say: We shall change all this; we shall organize detachments of young people who will help to maintain cleanliness or to distribute food, who will make systematic house-to-house inspections, who will work in an organized way for the benefit of the whole of society, properly distributing their forces and demonstrating that labour must be organized labour.

The generation which is now about fifty years old cannot expect to see the Communist society. This generation will die out before then.

But the generation which is now fifteen years old will see the Communist society, and will itself build this society.

And it must realize that the whole purpose of its life is to build this society.

In the old society work was carried on by separate families, and nobody united their labour except the landlords and capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organize all labour, no matter how dirty and arduous it may be, in such a way that every worker and peasant may say: I am part of the great army of free labour, and I can build up my life without the landlords and capitalists, I can establish the Communist system.

The Young Communist League must train everybody to conscious and disciplined labour while they are still young, from the age of twelve.

That is what will enable us to count on the problems that are now confronting us being solved.

It can learn Communism only by linking up every step in its studies, training and education with the continuous struggle the proletarians and the toilers are waging against the old exploiting society.

When people talk to us about morality, we say: for the Communist, morality lies entirely in this compact, united discipline and conscious mass struggle against the exploiters. We do not believe in an eternal morality, and we expose all the fables about morality.

Morality serves the purpose of helping human society to rise to a higher level and to get rid of the exploitation of labour.

To achieve this we need the younger generation which began to awaken to conscious life in the midst of the disciplined and desperate struggle against the bourgeoisie. In this struggle it is training genuine Communists, it must subordinate to this struggle and link up with it every step in its studies, education and training.

The training of the Communist youth must not consist of sentimental speeches and moral precepts. This is not training.

When people see how their fathers and mothers live under the yoke of the landlords and capitalists, when they themselves experience the sufferings that befall those who start the struggle against the exploiters, when they see what sacrifices the continuation of this struggle entails in order to defend what has been won, and when they see what frenzied foes the landlords and capitalists are—they are trained in this environment to become Communists.

The basis of Communist morality is the struggle for the consolidation and completion of Communism. That is also the basis of Communist training, education, and teaching. That is the reply to the question how Communism should be learnt.

We would not believe in teaching, training and education if they were confined only to the school and were divorced from the storm of life. As long as the workers and peasants are oppressed by the landlords and capitalists, and as long as the schools remain in the hands of the landlords and capitalists, the young generation will remain blind and ignorant.

But our school must impart to the youth the fundamentals of knowledge, it must train them in the ability to work out Communist views independently, it must make educated people of them. At the same time, as long as people attend school, it must make them participants in the struggle for emancipation from the exploiters.

The Young Communist League will justify its name as the League of the young Communist generation when it links up every step in its teaching, training and education with participation in the general struggle of all the toilers against the exploiters. For you know perfectly well that as long as Russia remains the only workers' republic, while the old bourgeois system exists in the rest of the world, we shall be weaker than they, we shall be under the constant menace of a new attack, and that

only if we learn to be solid and united shall we win in the further struggle and—having gained strength—become really invincible.

Thus, to be a Communist means that you must organize and unite the whole rising generation and set an example of training and discipline in this struggle. Then you will be able to start building the edifice of Communist society and bring it to completion.

In order to make this clearer to all I will quote an example. We call ourselves Communists.

What is a Communist?

Communist is a Latin word. Communist is derived from the word "common." Communist society is a society in which all things—the land, the factories—are owned in common. Communism means working in common.

Is it possible to work in common if each one works separately on his own plot of land? Work in common cannot be brought about all at once. It does not drop from the skies. It comes by toil and suffering, it is created in the course of struggle. Old books are of no use here; no one will believe them. One's own living experience is required.

When Kolchak and Denikin advanced from Siberia and the South the peasants were on their side. They did not like Bolshevism because the Bolsheviks took their grain at a fixed price. But when the peasants in Siberia and the Ukraine experienced the rule of Kolchak and Denikin, they realized that they had only one alternative: either to go to the capitalist, and he would at once hand them over into slavery to the landlord; or to follow the worker, who, it is true, did not promise a land flowing with milk and honey, who demanded iron discipline and firmness in an arduous struggle, but who would lead them out of enslavement to the capitalists and landlords.

When even the ignorant peasants realized and saw this from their own experience they became conscious adherents of Communism, who had passed through a stern school. It is such experience that must form the basis of all the activities of the Young Communist League.

I have replied to the question what we must learn, what we must take from the old school and from the old science. I will now try to answer the question how this must be learnt. The answer is: only by inseparably linking every step in the activities of the school, every step in training, education and teaching, with the struggle of all the toilers against the exploiters.

I will quote a few examples from the experience of the work of some of the youth organizations to illustrate how this training in Communism should proceed.

Everybody is talking about abolishing illiteracy. You know that a Communist society cannot be built in an illiterate country. It is not enough for the Soviet government to issue an order, or for the Party to issue a particular slogan, or to assign a certain number of the best

could have created that compact force which the disunited and scattered peasantry are following and which has withstood all the onslaughts of the exploiters. Only this class can help the *toiling masses to unite, rally* their ranks and definitely defend, definitely consolidate and definitely build up Communist society.

That is why we say that for us there is no such thing as morality apart from human society, it is a fraud Morality for us is subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

What does this class struggle mean? It means overthrowing the tsar, overthrowing the capitalists, abolishing the capitalist class.

And what are classes in general? Classes are what permits one section of society to appropriate the labour of the other section.

If one section of society appropriates all the land, we have a landlord class and a peasant class. If one section of society possesses the mills and factories, shares and capital, while another section works in these factories, we have a capitalist class and a proletarian class.

It was not difficult to drive out the tsar—that required only a few days. It was not very difficult to drive out the landlords—that was done in a few months. Nor was it very difficult to drive out the capitalists.

But it is incomparably more difficult to abolish classes, we still have the division into workers and peasants. If the peasant is settled on his separate plot of land and appropriates superfluous grain, that is, grain that he does not need for himself or for his cattle, while the rest of the people have to go without bread, then the peasant becomes an exploiter. The more grain he clings to, the more profitable he finds it, as for the rest, let them *starve. He says to himself "The more they starve* the dearer I can sell this grain"

Everybody must work according to a common plan, on common land, in common mills and factories and under common management. Is it easy to bring this about? You see that it is not as easy as driving out the tsar, *the landlords and the capitalists In order to achieve* this the proletariat must re educate, re train a section of the peasantry, it must win over to its side those who are toiling peasants, in order to crush the resistance of those peasants who are rich and are profiting by the poverty and want of the rest.

Hence the task of the proletarian struggle is not completed by the fact that we have overthrown the tsar and have driven out the landlords and capitalists, and its completion is the task of the system we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The class struggle is still continuing, it has merely changed its forms. It is the class *struggle of the proletariat* to prevent the return of the old exploiters, to unite the scattered masses of unenlightened peasants into one union The class struggle is continuing and it is our task to subordinate all interests to this struggle.

And we subordinate our Communist morality to this task. We say: morality is what serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the toilers around the proletariat, which is creating a new, Communist society.

Communist morality is the morality which serves this struggle, which unites the toilers against all exploitation, against all small property; for small property puts into the hands of one person what has been created by the labour of the whole of society.

The land in our country is common property.

But suppose I take a piece of this common property and grow on it twice as much grain as I need and profiteer in the surplus? Suppose I argue that the more starving people there are the more they will pay? Would I then be behaving like a Communist?

No, I would be behaving like an exploiter, like a proprietor. This must be combated.

If this is allowed to go on we shall slide back to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of the bourgeoisie, as has more than once happened in previous revolutions. And in order to prevent the restoration of the rule of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie we must not allow profiteering, we must not allow individuals to enrich themselves at the expense of the rest, and all the toilers must unite with the proletariat and form a Communist society.

This is the principal feature of the fundamental task of the League and of the organizations of the Communist youth.

The old society was based on the principle: rob or be robbed, work for others or make others work for you, be a slaveowner or a slave. Naturally, people brought up in such a society imbibe with their mother's milk, so to speak, the psychology, the habit, the concept: you are either a slaveowner or a slave or else, a small owner, a small employee, a small official, an intellectual—in short, a man who thinks only of himself, and doesn't give a hang for anybody else.

If I work this plot of land, I don't give a hang for anybody else; if others starve, all the better, the more I will get for my grain. If I have a job as a doctor, engineer, teacher, or clerk, I don't give a hang for anybody else. Perhaps if I toady to and please the powers that be I shall keep my job, and even get on in life and become a bourgeois. A Communist cannot have such a psychology and such sentiments.

When the workers and peasants proved that they were able by their own efforts to defend themselves and create a new society, a new Communist training began, a training in fighting the exploiters, a training in forming an alliance with the proletariat against the self-seekers and small owners, against the psychology and habits which say: I seek my own profit and I don't give a hang for anything else.

This is the reply to the question how the young and rising generation should learn Communism.

workers to this work The younger generation itself must take up this work

Communism consists in the youth, the young men and women who belong to the Youth League, saying This is our job, we shall unite and go into the rural districts to abolish illiteracy, so that there shall be no illiterates among our rising generation We are trying to get the rising generation to devote its activities to this work

You know that it will not be possible to transform ignorant, illiterate Russia into a literate country quickly. But if the Youth League sets to work on this job, if all the young people work for the benefit of all, the League, which has a membership of 400,000 young men and women, will be entitled to call itself a Young Communist League Another task of the League is, after having acquired any particular knowledge, to help those young people who cannot liberate themselves from the darkness of illiteracy by their own efforts

Being a member of the Youth League means devoting one's labour and efforts to the common cause That is what Communist training means Only in the course of such work does a young man or woman become a real Communist Only in this way, only if they achieve practical results in *this work will they become Communists*

Take, for example, work on the suburban vegetable gardens This is one of the duties of the Young Communist League The people are starving, there is starvation in the mills and factories In order to save ourselves from starvation, vegetable gardens must be developed But agriculture is being carried on in the old way

Therefore, more class conscious elements should undertake this work, and you would then find that the number of vegetable gardens would increase, their area grow, and the results improve The Young Communist League should take an active part in this work Every League and every branch of the League should regard this as its job

The Young Communist League should be a shock *group, helping in* every job and displaying initiative and enterprise The League should be such that any worker may see that it consists of people whose doctrines he may not understand, whose doctrines he perhaps may not immediately believe, but whose practical work and activity prove to him that they are really the people who are showing him the right road

If the Young Communist League fails to organize its work in this way in all fields, it will show that it is slipping into the old bourgeois road

We must combine our training with the struggle of the toilers against the exploiters in order to help the former to perform the tasks that follow from the doctrines of *Communism*

The members of the League should spend every spare hour in improving the vegetable gardens, or in organizing the education of young people in some mill or factory, and so forth

We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into a wealthy country. And the Young Communist League must combine its education, teaching and training with the labour of the workers and peasants, so as not to shut itself up in its schools and confine itself to reading Communist books and pamphlets.

Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants can one become a genuine Communist.

And everyone must be made to see that all those who belong to the Youth League are literate and at the same time know how to work. When everyone sees that we have driven the old drill methods from the old school and have replaced them by conscious discipline, that all young men and women are taking part in subbotniks, that they are utilizing every suburban farm to help the population—the people will cease to look upon labour as they looked upon it before.

It is the task of the Young Communist League to organize assistance in village and city block in such a matter as—I take a small example—cleanliness and the distribution of food.

How was this done in the old capitalist society?

Everybody worked for himself alone, and nobody cared whether there were aged or sick, or whether all the housework fell on the shoulders of the women, who, as a result, were in a condition of oppression and slavery. Whose business is it to combat this? It is the business of the Youth Leagues, which must say: We shall change all this; we shall organize detachments of young people who will help to maintain cleanliness or to distribute food, who will make systematic house-to-house inspections, who will work in an organized way for the benefit of the whole of society, properly distributing their forces and demonstrating that labour must be organized labour.

The generation which is now about fifty years old cannot expect to see the Communist society. This generation will die out before then.

But the generation which is now fifteen years old will see the Communist society, and will itself build this society.

And it must realize that the whole purpose of its life is to build this society.

In the old society work was carried on by separate families, and nobody united their labour except the landlords and capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organize all labour, no matter how dirty and arduous it may be, in such a way that every worker and peasant may say: I am part of the great army of free labour, and I can build up my life without the landlords and capitalists, I can establish the Communist system.

The Young Communist League must train everybody to conscious and disciplined labour while they are still young, from the age of twelve.

That is what will enable us to count on the problems that are now confronting us being solved.

We must reckon that not less than ten years will be required for the electrification of the country, so that our impoverished land may be served by the latest achievements of technology.

And so, the generation which is now fifteen years old, and which in ten or twenty years' time will be living in Communist society, must arrange all their educational tasks in such a way that every day, in every village and in every city, the young people shall engage in the practical solution of some problem of common labour, even though the smallest, even though the simplest.

To the extent that this is done in every village, to the extent that Communist competition develops, to the extent that the youth prove that they can unite their labour, to that extent will the success of Communist construction be ensured

Only by regarding every step one takes from the standpoint of the success of this construction, only by asking ourselves whether we have done all we can to be united, conscious toilers, only in this long process will the Young Communist League succeed in uniting its half a million members into a single army of labour and win universal respect.

First Published in *Pravda* Nos 221, 222, and 223, October 5, 6 and 7, 1920

LETTER TO THE TULA COMRADES*

October 20, 1920

Dear Comrades,

As you put it, I agree with you, but if you want to use my opinion against your "opposition," *let them have* both your letter to me and my reply. Then they will be properly informed and will be able to give me *their* side of the case, and I will not be informed one-sidedly.

As to the essence of the question, I will be brief. As long as we have not beaten Wrangel *completely,* as long as we have not taken the whole of the Crimea, military tasks take *first* place. That is absolutely indisputable.

Then, *as regards* Tula, with its small-arms and cartridge factories, *it may very well be* that for some time *even after victory* over Wrangel the task of completing the work of producing arms and cartridges will hold first place, *for the army must be made ready* for the spring.

Excuse my brevity and please let me know whether you showed the "opposition" this letter of mine and your letter to me.

With Communist greetings,

Lenin

Published in 1942
in the *Lenin Miscellany,*
Vol. XXXIV

---

* Certain members of the Presidium of the Tula Provincial Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) wrote to Lenin requesting his opinion as to "which of the two positions in the period Soviet Russia is at present passing through is correct—the position which would give first place to peaceful constructive work, or the other, which would give first place to the necessity of bending every effort for the settlement of our military problems." The authors of the letter expressed the fear that giving first place to economic tasks and tasks of enlightenment, as certain members of the Tula Party organization were advocating, would weaken the intensity of work and discipline in the Tula munitions factories (Archives of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, File No. 5717).

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO THE PEACEFUL WORK OF ECONOMIC RESTORATION

PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF RESOLUTION OF THE TENTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY ON PARTY UNITY*

1. The Congress calls the attention of all members of the Party to the fact that the unity and solidarity of the ranks of the Party, ensuring complete mutual confidence among Party members and genuine team work, genuinely embodying the unanimity of will of the vanguard of the proletariat, are particularly essential at the present juncture when a number of circumstances are increasing the vacillation among the petty bourgeois population of the country.

2. Notwithstanding this, even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions, certain signs of factionalism had been apparent in the Party, *viz.*, the formation of groups with separate platforms, striving to a certain degree to segregate and create their own group discipline. Such symptoms of factionalism were manifested, for example, at a Party conference in Moscow (November 1920) and in Kharkov, both by the so-called "Workers' Opposition" group, and partly by the so-called "Democratic-Centralism" group.

All class-conscious workers must clearly realize the perniciousness and impermissibility of factionalism of any kind, for no matter how the representatives of individual groups may desire to safeguard Party unity, in practice factionalism inevitably leads to the weakening of team work and to intensified and repeated attempts by the enemies of the Party, who have fastened themselves onto it because it is the governing Party, to widen the cleavage and to use it for counter-revolutionary purposes.

The way the enemies of the proletariat take advantage of every deviation from the thoroughly consistent Communist line was perhaps most strikingly shown in the case of the Kronstadt mutiny,** when the bour-

* The draft resolution was written by Lenin on March 14-15, 1921 and was adopted by the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on March 16, by an overwhelming majority, following Lenin's Report on Party Unity and the Anarcho-Syndicalist Deviation.—*Ed.*

** The reference here is to the counter-revolutionary mutiny in Kronstadt in the spring of 1921 directed against the Soviet government. The mutiny was swiftly suppressed.—*Ed.*

geois counter-revolutionaries and Whiteguards in all countries of the world immediately expressed their readiness to accept even the slogans of the Soviet system, if only they might thereby secure the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, and when the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries in general resorted in Kronstadt to slogans calling for an insurrection against the Soviet government of Russia ostensibly in the interest of Soviet power. These facts fully prove that the Whiteguards strive, and are able, to disguise themselves as Communists, and even as the most Left Communists, solely for the purpose of weakening and overthrowing the bulwark of the proletarian revolution in Russia. Menshevik leaflets distributed in Petrograd on the eve of the Kronstadt mutiny likewise show how the Mensheviks took advantage of the disagreements and certain rudiments of factionalism in the Russian Communist Party actually in order to egg on and support the Kronstadt mutineers, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Whiteguards, while claiming to be opponents of mutiny and supporters of the Soviet power, only with supposedly slight modifications.

3. In this question, propaganda should consist, on the one hand, of a comprehensive explanation of the harmfulness and danger of factionalism from the point of view of Party unity and of achieving unanimity of will among the vanguard of the proletariat as the fundamental condition for the success of the dictatorship of the proletariat; and, on the other hand, of an explanation of the peculiar features of the latest tactical devices of the enemies of the Soviet power. These enemies, having realized the hopelessness of counter-revolution under an openly Whiteguard flag, are now doing their utmost to utilize the disagreements within the Russian Communist Party and to further the counter-revolution in one way or another by transferring the power to the political grouping which outwardly is closest to the recognition of the Soviet power.

Propaganda must also teach the lessons of preceding revolutions, in which the counter-revolution supported that opposition to the extreme revolutionary party which stood closest to the latter in order to shake and overthrow the revolutionary dictatorship and thus pave the way for the complete victory of the counter-revolution, of the capitalists and landlords.

4. In the practical struggle against factionalism, every organization of the Party must take strict measures to prevent any factional actions whatsoever. Criticism of the Party's shortcomings, which is absolutely necessary, must be conducted in such a way that every practical proposal shall be submitted immediately, without any delay, in the most precise form possible, for consideration and decision to the leading local and central bodies of the Party. Moreover, everyone who criticizes must see to it that the form of his criticism takes into account the position of the Party, surrounded as it is by a ring of enemies, and that the content

of his criticism is such that, by directly participating in Soviet and Party work, he can test the rectification of the errors of the Party or of individual Party members in practice. Every analysis of the general line of the Party, estimate of its practical experience, verification of the fulfilment of its decisions, study of methods of rectifying errors, etc., must under no circumstances be submitted for preliminary discussion to groups formed on the basis of "platforms," etc., but must be exclusively submitted for discussion directly to all the members of the Party. For this purpose, the Congress orders that the *Discussion Bulletin* and special symposiums be published more regularly, and that unceasing efforts be made to secure that criticism shall be concentrated on essentials and not assume a form capable of assisting the class enemies of the proletariat.

5. Rejecting, in principle the deviation towards syndicalism and anarchism, to the examination of which a special resolution is devoted, and instructing the Central Committee to secure the complete elimination of all factionalism, the Congress at the same time declares that every practical proposal concerning questions to which the so-called "Workers' Opposition" group, for example, has devoted special attention, such as purging the Party of non-proletarian and unreliable elements, combating bureaucracy, developing democracy and the initiative of workers, etc., must be examined with the greatest care and tried out in practical work. The Party must know that we do not take all the measures that are necessary in regard to these questions because we encounter a number of obstacles of various kinds, and that, while ruthlessly rejecting unpractical and factional pseudo-criticisms, the Party will unceasingly continue—trying out new methods—to fight with all the means at its disposal against bureaucracy, for the extension of democracy and initiative, for discovering, exposing and expelling alien elements from the Party, etc.

6. The Congress therefore hereby declares dissolved and orders the immediate dissolution of all groups without exception that have been formed on the basis of one platform or another (such as the "Workers' Opposition" group, the "Democratic-Centralism" group, etc.). Non-observance of this decision of the Congress shall involve absolute and immediate expulsion from the Party.

7. In order to ensure strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to secure the maximum unanimity in removing all factionalism, the Congress authorizes the Central Committee, in cases of breach of discipline or of a revival or toleration of factionalism, to apply all Party penalties; including expulsion, and in regard to members of the Central Committee to reduce them to the status of alternate members and even, as an extreme measure, to expel them from the Party. A necessary condition for the application of such an extreme measure to members of the Central Committee, alternate members of the Central Committee and members of the Control Commission is the convocation of a plenum of

the Central Committee, to which all alternate members of the Centr Committee and all members of the Control Commission shall be invite If such a general assembly of the most responsible leaders of the Part by a two thirds majority, deems it necessary to reduce a member of th Central Committee to the status of alternate member, or to expel hi from the Party, this measure shall be put into effect immediately.

Published in 1921 in
The Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party Verbatim Report, March 8 16, 1921

PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF RESOLUTION OF THE TENTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY ON THE SYNDICALIST AND ANARCHIST DEVIATION IN OUR PARTY*

1. For the past few months a syndicalist and anarchist deviation has been definitely revealed in our Party, and calls for the most resolute measures of ideological struggle and also for purging and restoring the health of the Party.

2. The said deviation is due partly to the influx into the Party of former Mensheviks and also of workers and peasants who have not yet fully assimilated the Communist world outlook; mainly, however, this deviation is due to the influence exercised upon the proletariat and on the Russian Communist Party by the petty-bourgeois element, which is exceptionally strong in our country, and which inevitably engenders vacillation to the side of anarchism, particularly at a time when the conditions of the masses have sharply deteriorated as a consequence of the bad harvest and the devastating effects of war, and when the demobilization of the army numbering millions releases hundreds and hundreds of thousands of peasants and workers unable immediately to find regular means of livelihood.

3. The most theoretically complete and formulated expression of this deviation (*or*: one of the most complete, etc., expressions of this deviation) are the theses and other literary productions of the group known as the "Workers' Opposition." Sufficiently illustrative of this is, for example, the following thesis propounded by this group: "The organization of the administration of the national economy is the function of an All-Russian Producers' Congress organized in industrial unions, which elect a central organ for the administration of the entire national economy of the Republic."

The ideas at the bottom of this and numerous analogous statements are radically wrong in theory, and represent a complete rupture with Marxism

* The draft resolution submitted by Lenin was adopted by the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on March 16, 1921.—*Ed.*

and Communism as well as with the practical experience of all semi-proletarian revolutions and of the present proletarian revolution.

Firstly, the concept "producer" combines proletarians with semi-proletarians and small commodity producers, thus radically departing from the fundamental concept of the class struggle and from the fundamental demand for drawing a precise distinction between classes.

Secondly, banking on the non-Party masses, flirting with them, as expressed in the above-quoted theses, is no less a radical departure from Marxism.

Marxism teaches—and this tenet has not only been formally endorsed by the whole of the Communist International in the decisions of the Second (1920) Congress of the Comintern on the role of the political party of the proletariat, but has also been endorsed in practice by our revolution—that only the political party of the working class, *i.e.*, the Communist Party, is capable of uniting, training and organizing a vanguard of the proletariat and of the mass of the working people that alone will be capable of withstanding the inevitable petty-bourgeois vacillations of this mass and the inevitable traditions and relapses of narrow-craft unionism or craft prejudices among the proletariat, and of guiding all the united activities of the whole of the proletariat, *i.e.*, of leading it politically, and through it, the whole mass of the working people. Without this the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible.

The misinterpretation of the role of the Communist Party in relation to the non-Party proletariat, and in the relation of the first and second factor to the whole mass of working people, is a radical, theoretical departure from Communism and a deviation to the side of syndicalism and anarchism with which all the views of the "Workers' Opposition" are permeated.

4. The Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party declares that it also regards as radically wrong all attempts on the part of the said group and of other persons to defend their fallacious views by referring *to point 5 of the economic section of the program of the Russian Communist* Party which deals with the role of the trade unions. This point says that "the trade unions must eventually actually concentrate in their hands the entire administration of the whole of national economy as a single economic unit." "Ensuring in this way indissoluble ties between the central state administration, national economy and the broad masses of the working people" they must "draw" these masses "into the direct work of managing economy."

This point in the program of the Russian Communist Party also states that a condition precedent to the trade unions "eventually concentrating" is that they must "to an increasing degree free themselves from the narrow craft spirit" and embrace the majority "and gradually all" the workers.

Lastly, this point in the program of the Russian Communist Party

emphasizes that "according to the laws of the R.S.F.S.R. and by established practice the trade unions already participate in all the local and central organs of administration of industry."

Instead of studying the practical experience of participation in administration, and instead of developing this experience further, strictly in conformity with successes achieved and rectified mistakes, the syndicalists and anarchists advance as an immediate slogan "congresses or a Congress of Producers" "which elect" the organs of administration of economy. Thus, the leading, educational and organizing role of the Party in relation to the trade unions of the proletariat, and of the latter to the semi-petty-bourgeois and even wholly petty-bourgeois masses of working people, is utterly evaded and eliminated, and instead of continuing and correcting the practical work of building new forms of *economy already begun by the Soviet government*, we get petty-bourgeois anarchist disruption of this work, which can only lead to the triumph of the bourgeois counter-revolution.

5. In addition to theoretical fallacies and a radically wrong attitude towards the practical experience of economic construction already begun by the Soviet government, the Congress of the Russian Communist Party discerns in the views of these and analogous groups and persons a gross political mistake and a direct political danger to the very existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In a country like Russia, the overwhelming preponderance of the petty-bourgeois element and the devastation, impoverishment, epidemics, bad harvests, extreme want and hardship inevitably resulting from the war, engender particularly sharp vacillations in the moods of the petty-bourgeois and semi-proletarian masses. At one moment the swing is in the direction of strengthening the alliance between these masses and the proletariat, and at another moment in the direction of bourgeois restoration. The whole experience of all revolutions in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries shows absolutely clearly and convincingly that the only possible result of these vacillations—if the unity, strength and influence of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat is weakened in the slightest degree—can be the restoration of the power and property of the capitalists and landlords.

Hence, the views of the "Workers' Opposition" and of similar elements are not only wrong in theory, but in practice are an expression of petty-bourgeois and anarchist wavering, in practice weaken the consistency of the leading line of the Communist Party, and in practice help the class enemies of the proletarian revolution.

6. In view of all this, the Congress of the Russian Communist Party, emphatically rejecting the said ideas which express a syndicalist and anarchist deviation:

Firstly, is of the opinion that an unswerving and systematic ideological struggle must be waged against these ideas;

Secondly, regards the propaganda of these ideas as being incompatible with membership of the Russian Communist Party.

Instructing the Central Committee of the Party strictly to enforce these decisions, the Congress at the same time points out that space can and should be devoted in special publications, symposiums, etc., for a most comprehensive interchange of opinion among Party members on all the questions herein indicated.

Published in 1921 in
The Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party Verbatim Report, March 8-16, 1921

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF TRANSPORT WORKERS

MARCH 27, 1921

Comrades, permit me first of all to thank you for your greetings and in reply also to greet your Congress. Before dealing with the subject that directly concerns the work of your Congress, and with what the Soviet government expects of your Congress, permit me to refer to something that is somewhat remote from the subject.

As I was coming through your hall, just now, I saw a placard bearing the inscription: "The reign of the workers and peasants will never end." And when I read this strange placard, which, it is true, was not posted in the usual place, but in a corner—perhaps it occurred to somebody that it was not a good one and he shifted it out of the way—when I read this strange placard, I thought to myself: About what elementary and fundamental things there is confusion and misunderstanding! Indeed, if it were true that the reign of the workers and peasants will never end, that would mean that Socialism will never come, for Socialism means the abolition of classes; and as long as workers and peasants remain there will be various classes and therefore complete Socialism will be impossible. And pondering over the fact that three and a half years after the October Revolution there are still such queer placards in our country, even if shifted out of the way a little, I began to think that great confusion probably still prevails in regard to the most widespread and popular of our slogans. We all sing the song about facing the last fight—this, for example, is one of our most widespread slogans which everyone repeats. But I am afraid that if we were to ask a large section of Communists against whom they are waging, not the last fight, of course, that would be saying too much, but one of the last fights—I am afraid only a few would give a correct reply to this question and show that they clearly understand against what, or against whom, we are now waging one of our last fights. And it seems to me that this spring, in view of the political events which have taken place and upon which the attention of the broad masses of workers and peasants has been focussed, we ought once again to ascertain, or at all events try to ascertain, against whom

we are waging one of our last fights, this spring, right now Permit me to dwell on this question.

In order to understand this question I think we must first of all review once again, as precisely and as soberly as possible, the forces that confront each other, the conflict of which determines the fate of the Soviet regime, and, generally speaking, the progress and development of the proletarian revolution, the revolution for the overthrow of capital, in Russia as well as in other countries What are these forces? How are they grouped against one another? What is the disposition of these forces at the present time? Every really serious aggravation of the political situation, every new turn in political events, even if not very important, should always cause every thinking worker and every thinking peasant to ask himself this question, the question "What forces exist, how are they grouped?" And only when we are able to calculate these forces correctly and quite soberly, irrespective of our sympathies and desires, shall we be able to draw proper conclusions concerning our policy in general, and our immediate tasks in particular. Permit me then briefly to describe these forces.

Taken on the whole, there are three such forces. I will start with that force which is closest to us, I will start with the proletariat. This is the first force This is the first separate class You all know this very well, you yourselves live right in the very midst of this class What is the position now? In the Soviet Republic it is the class which took power three and a half years ago, which during this period has been exercising its rule, its dictatorship, and which suffered and endured exhaustion, want and privation more than any other class in these three and a half years For the working class, for the proletariat, these three and a half years, during the greater part of which the Soviet government was engaged in a desperate civil war against the whole capitalist world, meant poverty, privation, sacrifice, intense want, such as have never been experienced in the world before. A strange thing happened The class which took political power into its hands did so knowing that it took power alone. *That is a part of the concept* dictatorship of the proletariat This concept has meaning only when the single class knows that it alone is taking political power in its hands, and does not deceive itself or others with talk about "popular government, elected by all, sanctified by the whole people" As you all very well know, there are very many, far too many, who are fond of this sort of talk, but at all events you will not find them among the proletariat, because the proletarians have realized and have inscribed in the Constitution, in the fundamental laws of the Republic, that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat. This class understood that it was taking power alone under exceptionally difficult conditions It has exercised this power in the way every dictatorship does, *i e.*, it has exercised its political domination with the utmost firmness and indomitableness And during the three and a half years it has exercised this political rule it has suffered

distress, privation, starvation and a deterioration of its economic position such as no other class in history has suffered. It is not surprising that as a result of such superhuman effort we now see a special weariness and exhaustion and a special strain among this class.

How is it that *in a country in which the proletariat is numerically* so small compared with the rest of the population, that in a backward country artificially cut off by armed force from countries with a more numerous, class-conscious, disciplined and organized proletariat, how is it that in such a country a single class could exercise its power in spite of the resistance and the attacks of the bourgeoisie of the whole world? How could this go on for three and a half years? What sustained it? We know that the support came from within the country, from the masses of the peasants. I will deal with this second force in a moment; but first of all we must finish examining this first force. I said, and you have all observed the life of your comrades in the factories, works, railway depots, and workshops, and so you know, that never has the suffering of this class been so great and acute as it is in the epoch of its dictatorship. The country has never been so weary, so worn out as it is now. What gave this class the moral strength to bear these privations? It is clear and absolutely obvious that it had to obtain the moral strength to overcome these material privations from somewhere. As you know, the question of moral strength, of moral support, is an indefinite one; moral strength may mean anything, and may be made to mean anything. In order to avoid this danger of making the term "moral strength" mean something indefinite or fantastic, I ask myself whether it is possible to find signs of a precise definition of what gave the proletariat the moral strength to bear the unprecedented material privations connected with its political rule. I think that if we put the question in this way we shall find a precise reply. Ask yourselves, could the Soviet Republic have borne what it has for three and a half years, and could it so successfully have withstood the attacks of the Whiteguards supported by the capitalists of all countries of the world if it had had to face backward and not advanced countries? It is sufficient to put the question to receive an unhesitating reply.

You know that for three and a half years all the wealthiest powers in the world fought against us. The military forces that were lined up against us and supported Kolchak, Yudenich, Denikin and Wrangel—you all know this very well, every one of you fought in the Civil War—were many times, immeasurably and undoubtedly superior in numbers to our military forces. You know perfectly well that these states are still immeasurably stronger than we are. How is it, then, that after setting out to conquer the Soviet regime, they failed to do so? How could this happen? We have a precise reply to this question. This could and did happen because the proletariat in all the capitalist countries was for us. Even in those cases when it was obviously under the influence of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—they bear different names in European coun-

tries—it nevertheless refused to support the fight against us. At last the leaders were compelled to yield to the masses and the workers disrupted this war. We did not win the victory, our military forces were insignificant; the victory was won because the powers could not hurl the whole of their military forces against us. The workers of the advanced countries determine the course of war to such an extent that it is impossible to wage war against their will; and they at last disrupted the war against us by passive and semi-passive resistance. This incontrovertible fact gives a definite reply to the question of where the Russian proletariat was able to obtain the moral strength to hold out for three and a half years and win. The moral strength of the Russian worker was that he knew, felt, sensed the assistance and support which the proletariat in all the advanced countries of Europe rendered him in this struggle. The direction in which the labour movement in these countries is developing is indicated by the fact that there has not been in recent times a more important event in the labour movement of Europe than the split which took place in the Socialist parties in England, France, Italy, and other countries, vanquished and victors, in countries with different cultures and varying degrees of economic development. In all countries the most important event this year has been the fact that out of the broken and utterly shipwrecked Socialist and Social-Democratic parties—in Russia we call them Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—Communist Parties have been formed which rely on the support of all that is most advanced in the working class. And, of course, there can be no doubt that if instead of advanced countries, backward countries, in which there are no mighty proletarian masses, had fought against us, we would have been unable to hold out three and a half months, let alone three and a half years. Could our proletariat have had the moral strength had it not relied on the sympathy of the workers of the advanced countries, who supported us in spite of the lies about the Soviet regime that are broadcast by the imperialists in millions of copies, in spite of the efforts of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary "labour leaders," who were bound to and did hinder the struggle the workers waged for us? Relying on this support, our proletariat, numerically weak, tormented by poverty and privations, won, because it possessed moral strength.

This is the first force.

The second force is that which stands between developed capital and the proletariat. It is the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, it is what in Russia constitutes the overwhelming majority of the population—the peasantry. They are mainly small proprietors and small farmers. Nine-tenths of them are like that, and they cannot be anything else. They do not take part in the acute daily struggle between capital and labour. They have not been schooled; their economic and political conditions of life do not bring them together, but disunite them, repel one from the other, transform them into millions of individual, separate,

small proprietors. Such are the facts, of which you are all perfectly well aware. Collectives, collective farms and communes will not change this for many, many years to come. Thanks to the revolutionary energy and devotion of the proletarian dictatorship, this force was able to put an end to its enemies on the Right, the landlord class, more quickly than has ever been done before, to sweep it right away, abolish its rule with unprecedented rapidity. But the more quickly it abolished the rule of the landlords, the more quickly it turned to its farms on the nationalized land, the more resolutely it settled accounts with the small minority of kulaks, the sooner it itself became transformed into small masters. You know that during this period the Russian rural districts have become more levelled up. The number of peasants with a large amount of land and the number of landless peasants have diminished, while the number of middle farms has increased. During this period our rural districts have become more petty-bourgeois. This is an independent class, the class which, after the abolition, the expulsion of the landlords and capitalists is the only class capable of opposing the proletariat. That is why it is absurd to write on placards that the reign of the workers and peasants will never end.

You know what the political mood of this force is. It is a vacillating force. We have seen this in our revolution in all parts of the country—in one way in Russia proper, differently in Siberia, differently in the Ukraine, but everywhere the result is the same: it is a vacillating force. For a long time it was in the leading strings of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks—with the aid of Kerensky, in the Kolchak period, under the Constituent Assembly in Samara, when the Menshevik Maisky was a minister of Kolchak, or of one of his predecessors, etc. This force oscillated between the leadership of the proletariat and the leadership of the bourgeoisie. Why did not this force, which constitutes the overwhelming majority, lead itself? Because the economic conditions of life of these masses are such that they cannot organize and unite by their own efforts. This should be clear to everyone who does not yield to the power of empty words about "universal suffrage," about the Constituent Assembly and similar forms of "democracy," with which the people have been deceived for hundreds of years in all countries, and which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in our country played at for a hundred weeks and came a cropper "on this very spot every blessed time." We know from our own experience—and we see confirmation of it in the development of all revolutions, if we take the modern epoch, a hundred and fifty years, say, all over the world—that the result has been the same everywhere: every attempt on the part of the petty bourgeoisie in general, and of the peasants in particular to realize their strength, to direct economics and politics in their own way, has failed. Either under the leadership of the proletariat, or under the leadership of the capitalists—there is no middle course. All those who hanker after this middle course are empty dreamers,

fantasts. They are refuted by politics, economics, and history. All the teachings of Marx show that once the small proprietors become owners of means of production and land, exchange between them necessarily gives rise to capital, and simultaneously to the antagonisms between capital and labour. The struggle between capital and the proletariat is inevitable; it is a law which manifests itself all over the world; and those who do not want to deceive themselves cannot but realize this.

These fundamental economic facts explain why this force cannot manifest itself by its own efforts and why in the history of all revolutions its attempts to do so have always failed. In so far as the proletariat was unable to lead the revolution, this force always came under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. That was the case in all revolutions. Russians, of course are not made of different clay, and if they attempt to become saints, they will only make themselves look ridiculous. It goes without saying that history treats us as it treats others. This is particularly clear to all of us because we have experienced the rule of Kerensky. At that time the government had the support of a hundred times more leaders in politics, clever and educated people, men with great experience in politics and in the administration of the state, than the Bolsheviks have now. If we were *to count* all the *officials who sabotaged us, but who did not make it their* business to sabotage the Kerensky government, which relied on the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, we would find that they were in the overwhelming majority. But it collapsed nevertheless. Hence, there were factors which counterbalanced the enormous preponderance of intellectual and educated forces who were accustomed to administering the state and who had learnt this art decades before they had to take political power in their hands. This was also the experience, with certain modifications, in the Ukraine, the Don, and the Kuban, and all ended in the same way. There could be no fortuity here. Such is the economic and political law of the second force: either under *the leadership of the proletariat*—a hard road, but one which can lead out from under the rule of the landlords and capitalists—or under the leadership of the capitalists, as in the advanced democratic republics, even in America, where the free distribution of land (every settler was granted sixty dessiatins—better conditions could not be imagined!) has not yet entirely stopped, and where this has led to the complete domination of capital.

This is the second force.

In our country this second force is wavering; it is particularly weary. It has had to bear the burdens of the revolution, and in the past few years fresh burdens have been thrust upon it: the bad harvest year, the surplus grain appropriations at a time when the cattle were dying off due to the shortage of fodder, etc. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that this second force, the masses of the peasantry, should give way to despair. They could not think of improving their conditions in spite of

the fact that three and a half years have passed since the landlords were abolished; but this improvement has become an urgent necessity. The dispersing army cannot find proper employment for its labour power, and so this petty-bourgeois force is being transformed into an anarchist element which expresses its demands in unrest.

The third force is familiar to you all, it is the landlords and capitalists. This force is not conspicuous in our country today. But one of the particularly important events, one of the particularly important lessons of the past few weeks—the Kronstadt events—appeared like a flash of lightning and lit up reality more clearly than anything else.

There is not a country in Europe now in which there are no Whiteguard elements. It is calculated that there are about seven hundred thousand Russian émigrés abroad. These are fugitive capitalists and the mass of officials and clerks who could not adapt themselves to Soviet rule. We do not see this third force. It emigrated. But it lives and operates in alliance with the capitalists of the whole world, who are assisting it as they assisted Kolchak, Yudenich and Wrangel, assisting it with money and in other ways, because they have their international connections. We all remember these people. You, of course, have noticed in the newspapers in the last few days the abundance of extracts from the Whiteguard press, extracts and explanations of the events in Kronstadt. In the last few days these events have been described by Burtsev, who publishes a newspaper in Paris; they have been appraised by Milyukov—of course you have read all this. Why have our newspapers devoted so much attention to this? Was it right to do so? It was because we must clearly recognize our enemy. He is not so conspicuous now that he has emigrated. But see, he has not moved very far away, only a few thousand versts at most; having moved that distance, he took cover. He is intact, he is alive, he is waiting. That is why we must watch him closely, the more so that it is not merely refugees that we have to deal with. No, we have to deal with the direct coadjutors of world capital, maintained by it and operating in conjunction with it.

Of course, you all noticed that the extracts from the Whiteguard newspapers published abroad were given side by side with extracts from English and French newspapers. They constitute a single chorus, a single orchestra. It is true that these orchestras are not conducted by one man following a definite score. International capital conducts them by means less conspicuous than a conductor's baton, but that it is a single orchestra should be clear from any one of these extracts. They have admitted that if the slogan becomes "Soviet power without the Bolsheviks" they will all agree to it. And Milyukov explains this with particular clarity. He has studied history very closely and has refurbished all his knowledge by experiencing Russian history on his own hide, as it were. He has supplemented his twenty years' professorial study with twenty months of personal experience. He declares that if the slogan becomes "Soviet power

without the Bolsheviks" he will be in favour of it. Abroad, in Paris, he cannot see whether this shift will be a little to the Right or a little to the Left, to the anarchists. He cannot see what is going on in Kronstadt, but he says: "Messieurs monarchists, don't hurry, don't spoil the game by shouting about it." He says that even if the shift is to the Left he is prepared to be in favour of Soviet power against the Bolsheviks.

This is what Milyukov writes, and he is absolutely right. When he says that the Kronstadt events reveal a striving to create Soviet rule without the Bolsheviks he shows that he has learnt something from Russian history and from the landlords and capitalists. A little to the Right, with a little bit of free trade, with a little bit of the Constituent Assembly—listen to any Menshevik, and you will hear all this, perhaps, even, without leaving this hall. If the slogan in the Kronstadt events is a deviation slightly to the Left—Soviet power with the anarchists, begotten by misfortune, war, the demobilization of the army—why is Milyukov in favour of it? Because he knows that a deviation may be either towards the proletarian dictatorship or towards the capitalists.

Political power cannot exist in any other way. Although we are waging, not the last fight, but one of the last fights, the only correct reply to the question "Against whom shall we wage one of the last fights today?" is: "Against petty-bourgeois anarchy at home." [*Applause.*] As for the landlords and capitalists, we vanquished them in the first campaign, but only in the first; the second campaign will be waged on an international scale. Modern capitalism cannot fight against us, it could not even if it were a hundred times stronger than it is, because over there, in the advanced countries, the workers disrupted its war yesterday and will disrupt it even better, even more effectively today; because over there the consequences of the war are unfolding themselves more and more. As for the petty-bourgeois element at home, we have vanquished it, but it will make itself felt again. And this is what is taken into account by the landlords and the capitalists, particularly the cleverer of them, like Milyukov, who said to the monarchists: "Sit still, keep quiet, otherwise you will only strengthen the Soviet regime." This has been proved by the general progress of the revolutions in which there were short-lived dictatorships of the toilers temporarily supported by the rural districts, but in which there was no consolidated power of the toilers; after a brief period everything slipped back. Everything slipped back precisely because the peasants, the toilers, the small proprietors, cannot have their own policy, and after vacillating for some time they have to retreat. That was the case in the Great French Revolution, that was the case on a smaller scale in all revolutions. And, of course, everybody has learnt this lesson. Our Whiteguards crossed the frontier, rode off a distance of three days' journey, and are watching and waiting, backed and supported by West European capital. This is the situation. Hence, the tasks and duties of the proletariat are clear.

Weariness and exhaustion give rise to a certain mood, and sometime to desperation. As is always the case, among revolutionary element this mood and desperation find expression in anarchism. That was the case in all capitalist countries, that is what is taking place in this country The petty-bourgeois element is undergoing a crisis because it has had a hard time of it during the past few years; not as hard as the proletariat had it in 1919, but a hard time, nevertheless. The peasantry had to save the state, had to agree to surplus grain appropriations without remunera-tion; but it cannot stand this strain any longer. That is why it is filled with apprehension, why it is vacillating, wavering; and that is what is being taken into account by the capitalist enemy, who says: "Only get it shaking, rocking a little, and the whole thing will start rolling." This is what the Kronstadt events mean in the light of the alignment of class forces in Russia and on an international scale. This is what one of the last fights we are waging means; for we have not vanquished this petty-bourgeois-anarchist element, and the immediate fate of the revo-lution today will be determined by whether we vanquish it or not. If we do not, we shall roll back as the French revolution did. This is inevit-able, and we must look it in the face and not blind ourselves with phrases and excuses. We must do all we possibly can to alleviate the position of these masses and preserve the proletarian leadership. If we do this, the growing movement of the Communist revolution in Europe will ob-tain fresh reinforcements. What has not taken place there today may take place to-morrow, and what will not take place to-morrow may take place the day after to-morrow; but in world history periods like to-morrow and the day after to-morrow mean no less than several years.

This is my reply to the question as to what we are now fighting for, waging one of our last fights for, the question as to the significance of recent events, the significance of the class struggle in Russia. It is now clear why this struggle has become so acute, why it is so difficult for us to begin to understand that it is not Yudenich, Kolchak or Denikin who is the principal enemy, but the conditions around us, our own environ-ment.

Now I can pass to the concluding part of my speech, which is already too long; to the position of railway and water transport, and to the tasks of the Railway and Water Transport Workers' Congress. I think that what I have described here is very closely, inseparably bound up with these tasks. There is hardly another section of the proletariat which comes so closely into contact with industry and agriculture in its everyday eco-nomic activity as the railway and water transport workers. You must provide food for the cities, and you must revive the rural districts by transporting manufactured goods to them. This is clear to everyone; but it is clearer to railway and water transport workers than to any-one else, because that is their everyday work. And from this, it seems to me, follow the exceptionally important tasks, the responsibility,

that devolve on the railway and water transport workers at the present time.

You all know that your Congress has gathered at a time when only recently friction existed between the upper and lower ranks of the union, and when this disharmony spread to the Party When this question was brought up at the last Party Congress, decisions were adopted to harmonize the upper and lower ranks by subordinating the upper ranks to the lower ranks, by rectifying the mistakes—minor mistakes, in my opinion, but mistakes that required rectification—that had been committed by the upper ranks You know that the Party Congress rectified these mistakes, that the Congress, which gathered when there was least harmony between the leading upper ranks, finished its labours with greater solidarity and greater unity in the ranks of the Communist Party than had existed up to that time. This is the legitimate, necessary and only correct reply that the vanguard, *i e*, the leading section of the proletariat, can give to the movement of the petty-bourgeois-anarchist element. If we class-conscious workers realize the danger of this movement, if we rally our forces, work ten times more harmoniously, display a hundred times more solidarity, we shall increase our forces tenfold, and then, having repulsed the military attack, we shall conquer the vacillations and wavering of this element that is disturbing the whole of our everyday life and, I repeat, is therefore dangerous. The decisions of the Party Congress, which rectified what was called to its attention, signify a great step forward in increasing the solidarity and unity of the proletarian army. You at your Congress must do the same and put the decisions of the Party Congress into practice.

I repeat, the fate of the revolution depends more directly upon the work of this section of the proletariat than upon any other section We must restore exchange between agriculture and industry, and in order to do that we must have material footholds. What is the material foothold for connection between industry and agriculture? It is railway and water transport. That is why it is your duty to pay particularly serious attention to your work This not only applies to those of you who are members of the Communist Party, and therefore the conscious vehicles of the proletarian dictatorship, but also to those of you who do not belong to the Party, but who are representatives of a trade union which unites a million, or a million and a half, transport workers All of you, learning the lessons of our revolution and of all preceding revolutions, must understand the difficulty of the present situation If you do not allow yourselves to be blinded by all sorts of slogans, such as "Freedom," "Constituent Assembly," "Free Soviets"—it is so easy to alter labels that Milyukov came out in the guise of a supporter of the Soviets of the Kronstadt republic—if you do not close your eyes to the alignment of class forces, you will acquire a sound and firm basis, a foundation for all your political conclusions. It will then be clear to you that we are passing through

a period of crisis in which it will depend on us whether the proletarian revolution marches to victory as unswervingly as it has done recently, or whether vacillations and waverings lead to the victory of the Whiteguards, which will not alleviate the situation, but turn Russia away from the revolution for many decades. The only conclusion that you, representatives of railway and water transport workers, can and should draw is—a hundred times more proletarian solidarity and proletarian discipline. We must achieve this at all costs, comrades, and achieve victory.

Pravda Nos. 67 and 68,
March 29 and 30, 1921

TO THE COMMUNISTS OF AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA, ARMENIA, DAGHESTAN AND THE MOUNTAIN REPUBLIC*

Comrades, in warmly greeting the Soviet Republics of the Caucasus, I permit myself to express the hope that their close alliance will serve as a model of national peace unprecedented under the bourgeoisie and impossible under the bourgeois system

But important as national peace among the workers and peasants of the Caucasian nationalities may be, the maintenance and development of the Soviet regime as the transition to Socialism are immeasurably more important The task is a difficult, but feasible one The most important thing for the successful fulfilment of this task is that the Transcaucasian Communists shall understand *the singularity of their position, of the position of their republics, as distinct from the position and conditions of the R S F S R, to understand the necessity of not copying our tactics, but of thoughtfully varying them in accordance with the difference in the concrete conditions*

The Soviet Republic in Russia obtained no political or military assistance from anywhere On the contrary, for years and years it fought against the military invasions of the Entente and against its blockade

The Soviet Republics of the Caucasus obtained political and, to a small extent, military assistance from the R S F S R This is a fundamental difference

Second now there is no need to fear invasion from the Entente or that they will render military assistance to the Georgian, Azerbaijan, Armenian, Daghestan and Mountain Whiteguards The Entente "burnt its fingers" on Russia, and that will probably compel it to be more cautious for some time.

Third the Caucasian republics are even more in the nature of peasant countries than Russia

* This letter, dated April 14, 1921, was addressed to G K Ordjonikidze —*Ed*

Fourth: economically, Russia has been, and to a considerable degree still is, cut off from the advanced capitalist countries; *the Caucasus can establish "cohabitation" and commercial intercourse with the capitalist West more quickly and easily.*

These are not all the differences; but the differences enumerated are sufficient to enable one to understand the necessity of adopting different tactics.

More mildness, caution, and readiness to make concessions to the petty bourgeoisie, to the intelligentsia, and particularly to the peasantry. Make the utmost, intense and speedy economic use of the capitalist West by means of a policy of concessions and by commercial intercourse. Oil, manganese, coal (Tkvarcheli mines), copper—such is the far from complete list of enormous mineral wealth. There is every possibility of widely developing a policy of concessions and commercial intercourse with foreign countries.

This must be done on a wide scale, firmly, wisely and circumspectly, and it must be utilized in every possible way for the purpose of improving the conditions of the workers and peasants, and for the purpose of enlisting the intelligentsia for the work of economic construction. Utilizing commercial intercourse with Italy, America and other countries, exert every effort to develop the productive forces of your rich region, "white coal" and irrigation. *Irrigation is particularly important as a means of raising agriculture and livestock farming at all costs.*

A slower, more cautious, more systematic transition to Socialism—this is what is possible and necessary for the republics of the Caucasus as distinct from the R.S.F.S.R. This is what must be understood, and what you must be able to carry out as distinct from our tactics.

We have made the first breach in world capitalism. A breach has been made. We have maintained our positions after a fierce, superhuman, severe, difficult and painfully intense war against the Whites, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who were supported by the whole of the Entente, by its blockade and by its military assistance.

You, comrades, Communists of the Caucasus, have no need to force a breach; take advantage of the favourable international situation that exists for you in 1921, and learn to create the new conditions with greater caution and more methodically. In 1921, neither Europe nor the whole world is what it was in 1917 and 1918.

Do not copy our tactics, but think out for yourselves the reasons why they have assumed these peculiar features, the conditions that gave rise to them, and their results; apply in your republics, not the letter, but the spirit, the sense, the lessons of the experience of 1917-21. Economically, base yourselves at once on commercial intercourse with the capitalist countries; do not begrudge the cost; let them have scores of millions' worth of valuable minerals.

Immediately make efforts to improve the conditions of the peasants an start on extensive work of electrification and irrigation. Irrigation is mos of all necessary and will most of all revive the region, regenerate it will bury the past and make the transition to Socialism more certain

Excuse the slipshod style of this letter; I had to dash it off in hast in order to despatch it with Comrade Myasnikov. Once again I send m best greetings and wishes to the workers and peasants of the Sovie Republics of the Caucasus.

April 14, 1921

Pravda Gruzii No. 55,
May 8, 1921

THE TAX IN KIND

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW POLICY AND ITS CONDITIONS

IN LIEU OF AN INTRODUCTION

The question of the tax in kind is at present attracting considerable attention and is giving rise to much discussion and argument. This is quite natural, because this is indeed one of the principal questions of policy under present conditions.

The discussion bears a rather disjointed character. This is a sin from which all of us suffer for reasons that are quite understandable. All the more useful would it be, therefore, to try to approach this question, not from its "topical" aspect but from the aspect of general principle. In other words, to examine the general, fundamental background of the picture on which we are now tracing the pattern of the definite practical measures of present-day policy.

In order to make this attempt I will take the liberty of quoting a long passage from my pamphlet *The Principal Task of Our Day—"Left-wing" Childishness and Petty-bourgeois Mentality*. This pamphlet was published by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in 1918 and contains, first, a newspaper article dated March 11, 1918, on the Brest Peace, and, second, my controversy with the then existing group of Left Communists, dated May 5, 1918. The controversy is superfluous now and so I delete it. I leave in what applies to the discussion about "state capitalism" and the main elements of our contemporary economics, the transitional economics from capitalism to Socialism.

This is what I wrote at that time:

THE CONTEMPORARY ECONOMICS OF RUSSIA

(EXCERPT FROM PAMPHLET OF 1918*)

"State capitalism would be *an advance* on the present state of affairs in our Soviet Republic. If state capitalism were established in approximately six months' time, it would be a great achievement and a sure

* *Cf.* "'Left-wing' Childishness and Petty-bourgeois Mentality," *Selected Works*, Vol. VII.—*Ed.*

guarantee that within a year Socialism will have gained a permanently firm foothold and will have become invincible in our country.

"I can imagine with what noble indignation some people will recoil from these words.... What! The transition to state *capitalism* in the Soviet Socialist Republic an advance?... Isn't this the betrayal of Socialism?"

"... And that is why we must deal with this point in greater detail.

"In the first place we must understand what exactly is the nature of the *transition* from capitalism to Socialism which gives us the right and the grounds on which to call our country a Socialist Republic of Soviets.

"Secondly, we must expose the error of those who fail to recognize the petty-bourgeois economic conditions and the petty-bourgeois element as the *principal* enemy of Socialism in our country.

"Thirdly, we must clearly understand the significance of the economic difference between the *Soviet* state and the bourgeois state.

"Let us examine these three points.

"No one, I think, in studying the question of the economics of Russia has denied their transitional character. Nor, I think, has any Communist denied that the term 'Socialist Soviet Republic' implies the determination of the Soviet government to achieve the transition to Socialism, and not that the present economic order is a Socialist order.

"But what does the word transition mean? Does it not mean, as applied to economics, that the present order contains elements, particles, pieces of *both* capitalism *and* Socialism? Everyone will admit that it does. But not all who admit this take the trouble to consider the precise nature of the elements that constitute the various social-economic formations which exist in Russia at the present time. And this is the crux of the question.

"Let us enumerate these elements:

"1) patriarchal, *i.e.*, largely natural peasant economy;

"2) small commodity production (this includes the majority of those peasants who sell grain);

"3) private capitalism;

"4) state capitalism, and

"5) Socialism.

"Russia is so vast and so varied that all these different types of social-economic formations are intermingled. This is what constitutes the peculiar feature of the situation.

"The question arises: what elements preponderate? Clearly, in a small-peasant country, the preponderating element must be the petty-bourgeois element, nor can it be otherwise, for the majority, the vast majority of the farmers are small commodity producers. The integument of state capitalism (grain monopoly, state-controlled producers and

traders, bourgeois co-operators) is pierced, now in one place, now in another, by *profiteers*, and the chief object of profiteering is *grain*.

"It is in this field that the main struggle is proceeding. Between what elements is this struggle being waged, if we are to speak in terms of economic categories such as 'state capitalism'? Between the fourth and the fifth in the order I have just enumerated? Of course not. It is not state capitalism that is at war with Socialism; it is the petty bourgeoisie plus private capitalism that are fighting against both state capitalism and Socialism. The petty bourgeoisie oppose *every kind* of state intervention, regulation and control, whether it be state capitalist or state Socialist. This is an absolutely incontrovertible fact of our reality, and the failure to understand this lies at the root of a number of mistakes in economics. The profiteer, the trade marauder, the disrupter of monopoly—these are our principal 'internal' enemies, the enemies of the economic measures taken by the Soviet government. A hundred and twenty-five years ago it might have been excusable for the French petty bourgeois, the most ardent and sincere of revolutionaries, to endeavour to crush the profiteers by executing a few of the 'chosen' ones and by thunderous declarations. But today, the purely rhetorical attitude to this question assumed by some Left Socialist-Revolutionaries can rouse nothing but disgust and revulsion in an intelligent revolutionary. We know perfectly well that the economic basis of profiteering is the small proprietors, who are unusually widespread in Russia, and private capitalism, of which *every* petty bourgeois is an agent. We know that the millions of tentacles of this petty-bourgeois hydra encircle first one and then another section of the working class; that *instead of state monopoly*, profiteering forces its way through all the pores of our social and economic organism.

"Those who fail to see this show by their blindness that they are captives to petty-bourgeois prejudices. . . ."

"The petty bourgeois has money put away, several thousand gained 'honestly,' and for the most part dishonestly during the war. This is the economic type, the characteristic type, that serves as the basis of profiteering and private capitalism. Money is a certificate entitling the possessor to receive social wealth; and a vast stratum of small proprietors, numbering millions, cling to this certificate, conceal it from the 'state.' They do not believe in Socialism or Communism, and 'sit tight' until the proletarian storm blows over. Either we subordinate this petty bourgeoisie to *our* control and supervision (we can do this if we organize the poor peasants, that is, the majority of the population, or semi-proletariat, round the class-conscious proletarian vanguard), or they will overthrow our workers' government as surely and as inevitably as the revolution was overthrown by the Napoleons and Cavaignacs who sprang from this very soil of small ownership. This is how the question stands. It can stand in no other way. . . ."

he petty bourgeoisie, hoarding their thousands, are the enemies te capitalism. They want to use their thousands for themselves, t the poor peasants, in the teeth of all state control. And the sum of these thousands, amounting to many billions, forms the basis profiteering which is disrupting our Socialist construction. Let pose that a given number of workers produce in a certain number ys goods to the value of, say, 1,000. Suppose further, that of this 200 is lost to us as a result of petty profiteering, embezzlement he small proprietors 'evading' Soviet decrees and regulations. class-conscious worker will say: If better order and organization be obtained at the price of 300 I would willingly give 300 instead out of the 1,000, for it will be quite easy under the Soviet govern- to reduce this 'tribute' to 100 or to 50 later on, when order and ization are established and the petty-bourgeois disruption of state poly is finally stopped.

his simple illustration in figures—which I have deliberately sim- to the utmost in order to make it absolutely clear—explains the t *correlation* of state capitalism and Socialism. The workers hold al power; they have every legal opportunity of taking the whole nd, *i.e.*, without giving up a single kopek, except for Socialist es. This legal opportunity, which rests upon the actual transition ver to the workers, is an element of Socialism. But in many ways, mall proprietor and private capitalist element undermines this position, drags in profiteering, hinders the execution of Soviet s. State capitalism would be a gigantic step forward *even if* we *nore* than we are paying at present (I took this numerical example tately to bring this out more sharply), for it is worth while paying ition,' because it is profitable for the workers, because victory disorder, ruin and slackness is the most important thing; because ntinuation of small proprietor anarchy is the greatest, the most s danger that threatens us and will *certainly* be our ruin (unless rcome it). On the other hand, not only will the payment of a heavier e to state capitalism not ruin us; it will lead us to Socialism by rest road. When the working class has learnt how to defend the system against small-proprietor anarchy, when it has learnt to up a great, nation-wide, state organization of production on state list lines, it will have, if I may use the expression, all the trump in its hands, and the consolidation of Socialism will be assured.

the first place, *economically*, state capitalism is immeasurably or to the present system of economy.

the second place, the Soviet regime has nothing to fear from it; e Soviet state is a state in which the power of the workers and the peasants is assured. . . ."

* * *

". . . To elucidate the question still more, let us first of all take the most concrete example of state capitalism. Everybody knows what this example is. It is Germany. Here we have 'the last word' in modern large-scale capitalist technique and planned organization, *subordinated to junker-bourgeois imperialism*. Cross out the words in italics, and, in place of the militarist, junker-bourgeois imperialist state, put *also* a *state*, but of a different social type, of a different class content—a Soviet, that is, a proletarian state, and you will have the *sum total* of the conditions necessary for Socialism.

"Socialism is inconceivable without the technique of large-scale capitalist industry based on up-to-date science. It is inconceivable without planned state organization which subjects tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a single standard in production and distribution. We Marxists have always insisted on this, and it is not worth while wasting two seconds talking to people who do not understand *even* this (anarchists and a good half of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

"At the same time Socialism is inconceivable unless the proletariat is the ruler of the state. This also is ABC. History (which nobody, except Menshevik blockheads of the first rank, ever expected to bring about 'complete' Socialism smoothly, gently, easily and simply) took such an original course that by 1918 it had *given birth* to two disconnected halves of Socialism existing side by side, like two future chickens in the single shell of international imperialism. In 1918 Germany and Russia were the embodiment of the most striking material realization of the economic, productive and social-economic conditions for Socialism on the one hand, and the political conditions for it, on the other.

"A successful proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and very easily shatter the shell of imperialism (which unfortunately is made of the best steel, and hence cannot be broken by the efforts of *any* . . . chicken). It would bring about the victory of world Socialism for certain, without any difficulty, or with slight difficulty—if, of course, by 'difficulty' we mean difficult on a world-historical scale, and not in the philistine-circle sense.

"While the revolution in Germany is slow in 'breaking out' our task is to *study* the state capitalism of the Germans, to spare *no effort* to copy it and not shrink from adopting dictatorial methods to hasten the copying of Western culture by barbarian Russia and not hesitate to use barbarous methods in combating barbarism. If there are anarchists and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (I suddenly recall the speeches of Karelin and Gay at the Central Executive Committee) who indulge in Narcissus-like reflections and say that it is unbecoming for us, revolutionaries, to 'take lessons' from German imperialism, there is only one thing we can say in reply to this: the revolution would perish utterly (and deservedly) if we took such people seriously.

"The petty bourgeoisie, hoarding their thousands, are the enemies of state capitalism. They want to use their thousands for themselves, against the poor peasants, in the teeth of all state control. And the sum total of these thousands, amounting to many billions, forms the basis of the profiteering which is disrupting our Socialist construction. Let us suppose that a given number of workers produce in a certain number of days goods to the value of, say, 1,000. Suppose further, that of this total, 200 is lost to us as a result of petty profiteering, embezzlement and the small proprietors 'evading' Soviet decrees and regulations. Every class-conscious worker will say: If better order and organization could be obtained at the price of 300 I would willingly give 300 instead of 200 out of the 1,000, for it will be quite easy under the Soviet government to reduce this 'tribute' to 100 or to 50 later on, when order and organization are established and the petty bourgeois disruption of state monopoly is finally stopped.

"This simple illustration in figures—which I have deliberately simplified to the utmost in order to make it absolutely clear—explains the present *correlation* of state capitalism and Socialism. The workers hold political power, they have every legal opportunity of taking the whole thousand, i.e., without giving up a single kopek, except for Socialist purposes. This legal opportunity, which rests upon the actual transition of power to the workers, is an element of Socialism. But in many ways, the small proprietor and private capitalist element undermines this legal position, drags in profiteering, hinders the execution of Soviet decrees. State capitalism would be a gigantic step forward *even if* we paid *more* than we are paying at present (I took this numerical example deliberately to bring this out more sharply), for it is worth while paying for 'tuition,' because it is profitable for the workers, because victory over disorder, ruin and slackness is the most important thing, because the continuation of small proprietor anarchy is the greatest, the most serious danger that threatens us and will *certainly* be our ruin (unless we overcome it). On the other hand, not only will the payment of a heavier tribute to state capitalism not ruin us, it will lead us to Socialism by *the surest road. When the working class has learnt* how to defend the state system against small proprietor anarchy, when it has learnt to build up a great, nation wide, state organization of production on state capitalist lines, it will have, if I may use the expression, all the trump cards in its hands, and the consolidation of Socialism will be assured.

"In the first place, *economically*, state capitalism is immeasurably superior to the present system of economy.

"In the second place, the Soviet regime has nothing to fear from it, for the Soviet state is a state in which the power of the workers and the

"... To elucidate the question still more, let us first of all take the most concrete example of state capitalism. Everybody knows what this example is. It is Germany. Here we have 'the last word' in modern large-scale capitalist technique and planned organization, *subordinated to junker-bourgeois imperialism*. Cross out the words in italics, and, in place of the militarist, junker-bourgeois imperialist state, put *also* a *state*, but of a different social type, of a different class content—a Soviet, that is, a proletarian state, and you will have the *sum total* of the conditions necessary for Socialism.

"Socialism is inconceivable without the technique of large-scale capitalist industry based on up-to-date science. It is inconceivable without planned state organization which subjects tens of millions of people to the strictest observance of a single standard in production and distribution. We Marxists have always insisted on this, and it is not worth while wasting two seconds talking to people who do not understand *even* this (anarchists and a good half of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

"At the same time Socialism is inconceivable unless the proletariat is the ruler of the state. This also is ABC. History (which nobody, except Menshevik blockheads of the first rank, ever expected to bring about 'complete' Socialism smoothly, gently, easily and simply) took such an original course that by 1918 it had *given birth* to two disconnected halves of Socialism existing side by side, like two future chickens in the single shell of international imperialism. In 1918 Germany and Russia were the embodiment of the most striking material realization of the economic, productive and social-economic conditions for Socialism on the one hand, and the political conditions for it, on the other.

"A successful proletarian revolution in Germany would immediately and very easily shatter the shell of imperialism (which unfortunately is made of the best steel, and hence cannot be broken by the efforts of *any* ... chicken). It would bring about the victory of world Socialism for certain, without any difficulty, or with slight difficulty—if, of course, by 'difficulty' we mean difficult on a world-historical scale, and not in the philistine-circle sense.

"While the revolution in Germany is slow in 'breaking out' our task is to *study* the state capitalism of the Germans, to spare *no effort* to copy it and not shrink from adopting dictatorial methods to hasten the copying of Western culture by barbarian Russia and not hesitate to use barbarous methods in combating barbarism. If there are anarchists and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (I suddenly recall the speeches of Karelin and Gay at the Central Executive Committee) who indulge in Narcissus-like reflections and say that it is unbecoming for us, revolutionaries, to 'take lessons' from German imperialism, there is only one thing we can say in reply to this: the revolution would perish utterly (and deservedly) if we took such people seriously.

"At present, petty-bourgeois capitalism prevails in Russia, and from it there is *one road*, which leads *both* to large-scale state capitalism *and* to Socialism, through *the same* intermediary station called 'national accounting and control of production and distribution.' Those who fail to understand this are committing an unpardonable mistake in economics. Either they do not know the facts of reality, do not see what actually exists and are unable to look the truth in the face, or they confine themselves to abstractly contrasting 'capitalism' to 'Socialism' and fail to study the concrete forms and stages of the transition that is taking place in our country.

"Let it be said in parenthesis that this is the very theoretical mistake which misled the best people in the *Novaya Zhizn* and *Vperyod* camp. The worst and the mediocre among these, owing to their stupidity and spinelessness, drag at the tail of the bourgeoisie, of whom they stand in awe. The best of them have failed to understand that it was not without reason that the teachers of Socialism spoke of a whole period of transition from capitalism to Socialism and emphasized the 'prolonged birth pangs' of the new social order. And this new order is also an abstraction which can come into being only by passing through a series of varied, imperfect, concrete attempts to create this or that Socialist state.

"It is because Russia cannot advance from its present economic position without traversing the ground *that is common* to state capitalism and to Socialism (national accounting and control) that the attempt to frighten others as well as oneself with the bogey of 'evolution *towards* state capitalism' is utter theoretical nonsense. To talk nonsense of this sort is to let one's thoughts wander 'away from' the true road of 'evolution,' is to fail to understand what this road is. In practice it is equivalent to *pulling back* to small proprietor capitalism.

"In order to convince the reader that this is not the first time I have given this 'high' appreciation of state capitalism and that I gave it *before* the Bolsheviks seized power, I take the liberty of quoting the following passage from my pamphlet *The Threatening Catastrophe and how To Fight It*, written in September 1917.

"' Now try to *substitute* for the junker-capitalist state, the landlord-capitalist state, a *revolutionary democratic* state, *i.e.*, a state which in a revolutionary way destroys all privileges and does not fear to introduce the fullest democracy in a revolutionary way, and you will find that, given a really revolutionary democratic state, state monopoly capitalism inevitably and unavoidably implies a step, or several steps, towards Socialism!

"'For Socialism is nothing but the next step forward from state-capitalist monopoly.

"'State-monopoly capitalism is a complete *material* preparation for Socialism, the *prelude* to Socialism, a rung in the ladder

of history between which and the rung called Socialism *there are no intermediate rungs*' (pp. 27 and 28).

"...Please note that this was written when Kerensky was in power, that we were discussing *not* the dictatorship of the proletariat, *not* the Socialist state, but the 'revolutionary-democratic' state. Is it not clear that *the higher* we stand on this political ladder, *the more completely* we incorporate the Socialist state and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviets, *the less* ought we to fear 'state capitalism'? Is it not clear that from the *material*, economic and productive point of view, we are not yet 'on the threshold' of Socialism? And that there is no other way of passing through the door of Socialism except by crossing the 'threshold,' which we have not reached yet?..."

* * *

"...The following is also extremely instructive.

"In our controversy with Bukharin on the Central Executive Committee, he declared, among other things, that on the question of high salaries for specialists 'we' 'are more to the Right than Lenin,' for in this case we see no deviation from principle, bearing in mind that Marx said that under certain conditions it would be more expedient for the working class to 'buy off this gang' (that is, the gang of capitalists, *i.e.*, to *buy out* from the bourgeoisie the land, factories, works and other means of production).

"This is an extremely interesting statement....

"...Let us consider Marx's idea carefully.

"Marx was discussing England of the seventies of the last century, of the culminating period in the development of pre-monopoly capitalism. At that time England was a country in which militarism and bureaucracy were less pronounced than in any other, a country in which there was the greatest possibility of a 'peaceful' victory for Socialism by the workers 'buying out' the bourgeoisie. And Marx said: Under certain conditions the workers will certainly not refuse to buy off the bourgeoisie. Marx did not commit himself—or the future leaders of the Socialist revolution—to matters of form, to methods and ways of bringing about the revolution; for he understood perfectly well that a vast number of new problems would arise, that the whole situation would change in the process of the revolution, that it would change *often* and *considerably* in the process of revolution.

"Well, and what about Soviet Russia? *After* power has been seized by the proletariat, *after* the armed resistance and sabotage of the exploiters has been crushed—is it not clear that *certain* conditions prevail similar to those which might have existed in England half a century ago had a peaceful transition to Socialism begun then? The subordination of the capitalists to the workers in England would have been assured at

that time owing to the following circumstances: 1) the absolute preponderance of workers, i e., proletarians, among the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in England in the 'seventies there was every hope of an extremely rapid spread of Socialism among agricultural labourers); 2) the excellent organization of the proletariat in trade unions (England was at that time the leading country in the world in this respect), 3) the comparatively high level of culture of the proletariat, which had been trained by centuries of development of political liberty; 4) the old habit of the well-organized English capitalists of settling political and economic questions by compromise—at that time the English capitalists were better organized than the capitalists of any country in the world (this superiority has now passed to Germany) These were the circumstances which at that time gave rise to the idea that the *peaceful* subjugation of the English capitalists by the workers was possible.

"In this country, at the present time, this subjugation is assured by certain premises of fundamental significance (the victory in October and the suppression, from October to February, of the armed and sabotaging resistance of the capitalists). But *instead* of the absolute preponderance of workers, that is, of proletarians, among the population, and a high degree of organization among them, the important factor of victory in this country was the support the proletarians received from the poorest and quickly pauperized peasantry. Finally, we have neither a high degree of culture nor the habit of compromise. If these concrete conditions are carefully considered it will become clear that we can and ought to employ two methods *simultaneously*, *i e.*, the ruthless suppression of the uncultured capitalists, who refuse to have anything to do with 'state capitalism' or to consider any form of compromise, and who continue by means of profiteering, by bribing the poor peasantry, etc., to hinder the application of the measures taken by the Soviets, and the *method of compromise*, or buying off the cultured capitalists, who agree with 'state capitalism,' who are capable of putting it into practice and who are useful to the proletariat as clever and experienced organizers of very large enterprises, which supply commodities to tens of millions of people.

"Bukharin is a well educated Marxian economist. Hence, he remembered that Marx was profoundly right when he taught the workers the importance of preserving the organization of large-scale production precisely for the purpose of facilitating the transition to Socialism and that (as *an exception*, and England was then an exception) the idea was conceivable of *paying the capitalists well*, of buying them off, if the circumstances were such as to compel the capitalists to submit peacefully and to come over to Socialism in a cultured and organized fashion, provided they were bought out.

"But Bukharin fell into error because he did not give sufficient thought to the concrete peculiarity of the situation in Russia at the present time—

an exceptional situation. We, the Russian proletariat, are in *advance* of any such country as England or Germany as regards our political order, as regards the strength of the political power of the workers; but we are *behind* the most backward West European country as regards well-organized state capitalism, as regards our level of culture and the degree of material and productive preparedness for the 'introduction' of Socialism. Is it not clear that the present peculiar situation demands that the workers shall make this peculiar offer to 'buy off' the most cultured, the most skilled, the most capable organizers among the capitalists who are ready to enter the service of the Soviet government and to help honestly to organize 'state' industry on the largest possible scale? Is it not clear that in such a peculiar situation we must make every effort to avoid two mistakes, each of which is, in its way, petty-bourgeois? On the one hand, it would be an irretrievable mistake to declare that since we admit that there is a discrepancy between our economic 'forces' and our political forces, it 'follows' that we should not have taken power. Such an argument can be advanced only by the 'man in the muffler' who forgets that there will never be 'conformity,' that it cannot exist either in the development of society or in the development of nature, that only by a series of attempts—each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided, will suffer from certain inconsistencies—will victorious Socialism be created by the revolutionary co-operation of the proletariat of *all* countries.

"On the other hand, it would be an obvious mistake to give free rein to loud-mouthed phrasemongers, who allow themselves to be carried away by 'dazzling' revolutionism, but who are incapable of sustained, thoughtful and deliberate revolutionary work which takes into account the most difficult stages of transition.

"Fortunately, the history of the development of the revolutionary parties and of the struggle Bolshevism waged against them has left us a heritage of sharply defined types. Of these, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and anarchists are striking examples of bad revolutionaries. They are now shouting—shouting hysterically, shouting themselves hoarse—against the 'compromise' of the 'Right Bolsheviks.' But they are incapable of thinking *why* 'compromise' is bad, and *why* 'compromise' has been justly condemned by history and by the course of the revolution.

"Compromise in Kerensky's time resulted in the surrender of power to the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the question of power is the fundamental question of every revolution. The compromise of a section of the Bolsheviks in October-November 1917 expressed either fear of the proletariat seizing power, or a desire to *share* power equally, not only with 'unreliable fellow-travellers' like the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, but also with the enemy, with the Chernovites and the Mensheviks, who would inevitably have hindered us in fundamental

matters, such as the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the ruthless suppression of the Bogayevskys,* the complete introduction of Soviet institutions, and in every act of confiscation

"Now power has been taken, retained and consolidated in the hands of a single party, the party of the proletariat, even without the unreliable fellow travellers ' To speak of compromises at the present time when there is no question, and there can be none, of sharing *power*, of renouncing the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, is merely to repeat, parrot fashion, words which have been learnt by heart, but not understood To describe as compromise' the fact that, having arrived at a situation when we can and must rule the country, we try to win over to our side, not grudging the cost, the most cultured elements capitalism has trained, to take them into our service against the disintegration caused by the small proprietor element—to describe this as compromise is to reveal a total incapacity to think out the economic problems of Socialist construction "

THE TAX IN KIND, FREE TRADE AND CONCESSIONS

In the arguments of 1918 quoted above there are a number of mistakes as regards the periods of time involved The periods turned out to be longer than was anticipated at that time This is not surprising But the main elements of our economic life have remained the same In a very large number of cases the peasant "poor" (proletarians and semi proletarians) have become middle peasants This has caused an increase in the small proprietor, petty bourgeois "element " The civil war of 1918 20 greatly increased the devastation of the country, retarded the restoration of its productive forces, and bled the proletariat more than any other class To this was added the failure of the harvest of 1920, the fodder shortage and the dying off of cattle, which still further retarded the restoration of transport and industry, because, among other things it interfered with the employment of peasants' horses for carting wood, our main fuel

As a result, the political situation in the spring of 1921 was such that immediate, resolute and very urgent measures had to be taken to improve the conditions of the peasantry and to increase their productive forces

Why the peasantry and not the workers?

Because in order to improve the conditions of the workers, grain and fuel are required This is the biggest "hitch" at the present time, from the point of view of national economy as a whole And it is impossible to increase the production and collection of grain and the collection and delivery of fuel except by improving the conditions of the peasantry, by raising

* *M P Bogayevsky* (1881 1918)—one of the leaders of the counter revolutionary Cossack movement on the Don —*Ed*

their productive forces. We must start with the peasantry. Those who fail to understand this, those who are inclined to regard this putting the peasantry in the forefront as the "renunciation," or something similar to the renunciation, of the dictatorship of the proletariat, simply do not stop to think, and yield to the power of words. The dictatorship of the proletariat means that the proletariat directs policy. The proletariat, as the leading, ruling class, must be able to direct policy in such a way as to solve first the most urgent, the most "vexed" problem. The most urgent thing at the present time is to take measures that will immediately increase the productive forces of peasant farming. Only in *this way* will it be possible to improve the conditions of the workers and strengthen the alliance between the workers and peasants, to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarian or representative of the proletariat who *refused* to improve the conditions of the workers in *this* way would *in fact* prove himself to be an accomplice of the Whiteguards and the capitalists; because to refuse to do it in this way would mean putting the craft interests of the workers above their class interests, would mean sacrificing the interests of the whole of the working class, of its dictatorship, its alliance with the peasantry against the landlords and capitalists, its leading role in the struggle for the emancipation of labour from the yoke of capital, for the sake of the immediate, momentary and partial benefit of the workers.

Thus, the first thing required is immediate and serious measures to raise the productive forces of the peasantry.

This cannot be done without a serious modification of our food policy. Such a modification was the substitution of the tax in kind for the surplus-appropriation system, the former to be connected with free trade, at least in local economic exchange, after the tax has been paid.

What, in essence, is the substitution of the tax in kind for the surplus-appropriation system?

Wrong ideas are widespread concerning this point. These wrong ideas are due mainly to the fact that people make no attempt to study the essence of the change; they do not ask: From what and to what the change is being made. They imagine that the change is from Communism in general to the bourgeois system in general. To counteract this mistake, one must inevitably refer to what was said in May 1918.

The tax in kind is one of the forms of transition from that peculiar "War Communism," which we were forced to resort to by extreme want, ruin and war, to the proper Socialist exchange of products. The latter, in its turn, is one of the forms of transition from Socialism, with the peculiar features created by the predominance of the small peasantry among the population, to Communism.

The essence of this peculiar "War Communism" was that we actually took from the peasant all the surplus grain—and sometimes even not only surplus grain, but part of the grain the peasant required for food—for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the army and of sustaining the work-

ers. Most of it we took on loan, for paper money. Had we not done that we would have been unable to vanquish the landlords and the capitalists in a ruined small-peasant country. And the fact that we were victorious (in spite of the assistance our exploiters obtained from the most powerful countries of the world) not only shows what miracles of heroism the workers and peasants are capable of in the struggle for their emancipation; it also shows what lackeys of the bourgeoisie the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Kautsky and Co. were when they *blamed* us for this "War Communism." It should be put to our credit.

But it is no less necessary to know the real extent of the service that stands to our credit. We were forced to resort to "War Communism" by war and ruin. It was not, nor could it be, a policy that corresponded to the economic tasks of the proletariat. It was a temporary measure. The correct policy of the proletariat which is exercising its dictatorship in a small-peasant country is to obtain grain in exchange for the manufactured goods the peasant requires. Only such a food policy corresponds to the tasks of the proletariat; only such a policy can strengthen the foundations of Socialism and lead to its complete victory.

The tax in kind is a transition to this. We are still in such a state of ruin, so crushed by the burden of war (the war of yesterday and the war which, owing to the rapacity and fury of the capitalists, may break out to-morrow) that we cannot give the peasant manufactured goods for *all* the grain we require. Knowing this, we are introducing the tax in kind, *i.e.*, we shall take the minimum of grain we require (for the army and the workers) in the form of a tax and will obtain the rest in exchange for manufactured goods.

We must not forget the following, however. Our poverty and ruin are so great that we cannot restore large-scale, factory, state Socialist production *at one stroke*. To restore our industry we must accumulate large stocks of grain and fuel in the big industrial centres, we must replace the worn-out machines with new ones, and so on. Experience has convinced us that this cannot be done at one stroke, and we know that after the ruinous imperialist war even the wealthiest and most advanced countries will be able to solve this problem only in the course of a long period of years. Hence, it is necessary, to a certain extent, to help to restore *small* industry, which does not need machines, does not need either state reserves or large stocks of raw material, fuel and food, and which can immediately render some assistance to peasant farming and increase its productive forces.

What will be the effect of this?

The effect will be the revival of the petty bourgeoisie and of capitalism on the basis of a certain amount of free trade (if only local). This is beyond doubt. It would be ridiculous to shut our eyes to it.

The question arises: Is it necessary? Can it be justified? Is it not dangerous?

Many questions like this are being asked, and in the majority of cases they merely reveal the simplicity, to put it mildly, of those who ask them.

Examine the way I, in May 1918, defined the existence in our economics of the elements (constituent parts) of the various social-economic formations. No one can deny the existence of all these five stages (or constituent parts), of all these five formations—from the patriarchal, *i.e.*, semi-savage, to the Socialist system. It is self-evident that the small-peasant "formation," partly patriarchal, partly petty-bourgeois, predominates in a small-peasant country. Since exchange exists, the development of small economy is petty-bourgeois development, it is capitalist development—this is an incontrovertible truth, an elementary truth of political economy, confirmed, moreover, by the everyday experience and observation of even the ordinary man in the street.

What policy can the Socialist proletariat pursue in the face of this economic reality? To give the small peasant *all* he needs of the manufactures produced by large-scale Socialist industries in exchange for his grain and raw materials? This would be the most desirable and the most "correct" policy—this is the policy we have started. But we cannot give *all* the manufactures, very far from it; nor shall we be able to do so very soon—at all events we shall not be able to do so until we complete the first stage of the electrification of the whole country. What is to be done? Either to try to prohibit entirely, to put the lock on, all development of private, non-state exchange, *i.e.*, trade, *i.e.*, capitalism, which is inevitable amidst millions of small producers. But such a policy would be foolish and suicidal for the party that tried to apply it. It would be foolish because such a policy is economically impossible. It would be suicidal because the party that tried to apply such a policy would meet with inevitable disaster. We need not conceal from ourselves the fact that some Communists sinned "in thought, word and deed" in this respect and dropped precisely into *such* a policy. We shall try to rectify these mistakes. We must rectify them without fail, otherwise things will go badly with us.

Or (and this is the last *possible* and the only sensible policy) not to try to prohibit, or put the lock on the development of capitalism, but to try to direct it into the channels of *state capitalism*. This is economically possible, for state capitalism—in one form or another, to some degree or other—exists wherever the elements of free trade and capitalism in general exist.

Can the Soviet state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, be combined, united with state capitalism? Are they compatible?

Of course they are. This is exactly what I argued in May 1918. I hope I proved it in May 1918. More than that, I then proved that state capitalism is a step forward compared with the small-proprietor (both small-patriarchal and petty-bourgeois) element. Those who juxtapose or compare state capitalism with Socialism only commit a host of mistakes, for in the

present political and economic circumstances it is essential to compare state capitalism also with petty-bourgeois production

The whole problem—both theoretical and practical—is to find the correct methods of directing the inevitable (to a certain degree and for a certain time) development of capitalism into the channels of state capitalism, to determine what conditions to hedge it round with, how to ensure the transformation of state capitalism into Socialism in the not distant future

In order to approach the solution of this problem we must first of all picture to ourselves as distinctly as possible what state capitalism will be and can be in practice within our Soviet system, within the framework of our Soviet state.

The simplest case, or example, of how the Soviet government directs the development of capitalism into the channels of state capitalism, of how it "implants" state capitalism, is concessions We all now agree that concessions are necessary, but not all of us ponder over what concessions mean. What are concessions under the Soviet system, from the point of view of the social economic formations and their interrelations? They are an agreement, a *bloc*, an alliance between the Soviet, *i e*, proletarian, state and state capitalism against the small-proprietor (patriarchal and petty-bourgeois) element The concessionaire is a capitalist He conducts his business on capitalist lines, for profit. He is willing to enter into an agreement with the proletarian government in order to obtain extra profits, over and above ordinary profits, or in order to obtain raw materials which he cannot otherwise obtain, or can obtain only with great difficulty The Soviet government gains by the development of the productive forces, by securing an increased quantity of goods immediately, or within a very short period We have, say, a hundred oil fields, mines, and forest territories. We cannot develop all of these—we lack the machines, food and transport And this is also why we are doing almost nothing to develop the other territories. Owing to the poor and inadequate development of the large undertakings, every aspect of the small-proprietor element gains in intensity, and this is reflected in the *deterioration of the surrounding* (and later the whole of) peasant farming, the diminution of its productive forces, decline in confidence in the Soviet government, thieving and widespread, petty (the most dangerous) profiteering, etc. By "implanting" state capitalism in the form of concessions, the Soviet government strengthens large-scale production as against small production, advanced production as against backward production, machine production as against hand production And it obtains a larger quantity of the manufactures of large-scale industry (percentage deduction), and strengthens state-regulated economic relations as against petty-bourgeois anarchical relations The moderate and cautious application of the concessions policy will undoubtedly help us quickly (to a certain, not very large,

degree) to improve the state of industry and the conditions of the workers and peasants—of course, at the cost of certain sacrifices, the surrender to the capitalist of tens and tens of millions of poods of very valuable products. The degree and the conditions that will make concessions advantageous and not dangerous to us are determined by the relation of forces, they are decided by struggle; for concessions are also a form of struggle, they are the continuation of the class struggle in another form, and under no circumstances are they the substitution of class peace for class war. Practice will determine the methods of struggle.

Compared with other forms of state capitalism within the Soviet system, state capitalism in the form of concessions is, perhaps, the simplest, most distinct, clearest and most precisely defined. Here we have a formal, written agreement with the most cultured, advanced, West European capitalism. We know exactly our gains and our losses, our rights and obligations. We know exactly the periods for which we grant the concessions. We know the terms of redemption before the expiration of the agreement if the agreement provides for such redemption. We pay a certain "tribute" to world capitalism; we "ransom" ourselves from it by such-and-such arrangements and obtain immediately a definite increase in stability in the position of the Soviet government, an improvement in the conditions of our economy. The whole difficulty with concessions lies in properly considering and weighing up all the circumstances when concluding a concession agreement, and then in being able to supervise its fulfilment. Undoubtedly, there are difficulties; and in all probability mistakes will be inevitable at first. But these difficulties are very minor ones compared with the other problems of the social revolution and, in particular, compared with the difficulties involved in other forms of developing, permitting and implanting state capitalism.

The most important task that confronts all Party and Soviet workers in connection with the introduction of the tax in kind is to be able to apply the principles, the fundamentals, of the "concessions" policy (*i.e.*, state capitalism, which is similar to the "concessions" policy) to the other forms of capitalism: free trade, local circulation, etc.

Take the co-operatives. It is not surprising that the decree on the tax in kind immediately necessitated a revision of the regulations governing the co-operatives and a certain extension of their "liberties" and rights. The co-operatives are also a form of state capitalism, but less simple; its outline is less distinct, it is more intricate and therefore creates greater practical difficulties for our government. The small commodity-producers' co-operatives (and it is the latter, and not the workers' co-operatives, that we are discussing as the predominant and typical form in a small-peasant country) inevitably give rise to petty-bourgeois capitalist relations, facilitate their development, push small capitalists into the foreground and benefit them most. It cannot be otherwise, since

the small proprietors predominate, and exchange is possible and nec essary Under the conditions prevailing in Russia at present, freedom and rights for the co operative societies mean freedom and rights for capitalism It would be stupid or criminal to close our eyes to this obvious truth

But, unlike private capitalism, "co operative" capitalism under the Soviet government is a variety of state capitalism, and as such it is advantageous and useful for us at the present time—in a certain measure, of course Since the tax in kind means the free sale of surplus grain (over and above that taken in the form of the tax), we must exert every effort to direct *this* development of capitalism—for free sale, free trade *is* the development of capitalism—into the channels of co operative capital ism Co operative capitalism resembles state capitalism in that it facil itates accounting, control, supervision and the establishment of con tractual relations between the state (in this case the Soviet state) and the capitalist Co operative trade is much more advantageous and useful than private trade not only for the above mentioned reasons, but also because it facilitates the amalgamation, the organization, of millions of the population, and later of the whole of the population, and this in its turn is an enormous gain from the point of view of the subsequent transition from state capitalism to Socialism

Let us compare concessions with the co operatives as forms of state capitalism Concessions are based on large-scale machine industry, the co operatives are based on small, handicraft, and partly even on patriarchal industry Each individual concession agreement affects one capitalist, or one firm, one syndicate, cartel or trust The co operative societies embrace many thousands and even millions of small proprietors Con cessions permit and even presuppose a definite agreement for a definite period Co operative societies permit of neither a definite agreement nor a definite period It is much easier to repeal the law on the co op eratives than to annul a concession agreement But the annulment of an agreement means an abrupt rupture in the practical relations of eco nomic alliance, or economic "cohabitation," with the capitalist, whereas the repeal of the law on the co operatives, or of any law for that matter, does not immediately break off the practical "cohabitation" between the Soviet government and the small capitalists, nor, in general, is it able to break off practical economic relations It is easy to "watch" a concessionaire, it is difficult to watch co operators The transition from concessions to Socialism is the transition from one form of large scale production to another form of large scale production The transition from small proprietor co operatives to Socialism is the transition from small production to large scale production, i e , it is a more complicated transition, but, if successful, is capable of embracing wider masses of the population, is capable of pulling up the deeper and more tenacious roots of the old, pre Socialist and even pre capitalist relations, which

most stubbornly resist all "innovations." The concessions policy, if successful, will give us a few exemplary—compared with our own—large enterprises built on the level of modern advanced capitalism. After a few decades these enterprises will entirely revert to us. The co-operative policy, if successful, will result in raising small economy and in facilitating its transition, within an indefinite period, to large-scale production on the basis of voluntary amalgamation.

Take a third form of state capitalism. The state enlists the capitalist as a merchant and pays him a definite commission on the sale of state goods and on the purchase of the produce of the small producer. A fourth form: the state leases to the capitalist entrepreneur an industrial establishment, oil fields, forest sections, land, etc., which belong to the state, the lease being very similar to a concession agreement. These two latter forms of state capitalism are not talked about, not thought about, not observed at all. This is not because we are strong and clever, but because we are weak and foolish. We are afraid to look "vulgar truth" straight in the face, and too often we yield to "exalting deception." We are constantly repeating that "we" are passing from capitalism to Socialism, but we forget to picture to ourselves precisely and distinctly who "we" are. We must constantly have in mind the whole list—absolutely without exception—of the constituent parts, of all the diverse systems of social economy in our economics that I enumerated in my article of May 5, 1918, in order that this clear picture may not be forgotten. "We," the vanguard, the advanced detachment of the proletariat, are passing directly to Socialism; but the advanced detachment is only a small part of the whole of the proletariat, while the latter, in its turn, is only a small part of the whole population. And in order that "we" may successfully solve the problem of our direct transition to Socialism we must understand what *auxiliary* paths, methods, means and instruments are required for the transition from *pre-capitalist* relations to Socialism. That is the whole point.

Look at the map of the R.S.F.S.R. To the north from Vologda, to the southeast from Rostov-on-Don and from Saratov, to the south from Orenburg and from Omsk, to the north from Tomsk, there are boundless areas big enough to contain scores of large civilized states. And over all these spaces patriarchalism, semi-savagery and real savagery reign. And what about the out-of-the-way peasant districts of the rest of Russia, wherever scores of versts of country track, or rather of trackless country, separate the villages from the railways, *i.e.*, from material connection with culture, with capitalism, with large-scale industry, with the big cities? Do not patriarchalism, *Oblomovism** and semi-savagery also predominate in those places?

---

* *Oblomovschina*—a term derived from Oblomov, the hero of Goncharov's novel of the same name, an embodiment of inertia, supineness and a passive, vegetating existence.—*Ed.*

Is a direct transition from this condition predominating in Russia to Socialism conceivable? Yes, it is conceivable to a certain degree, but on one condition, the precise nature of which we know now thanks to an enormous piece of scientific work that has been completed. That condition is electrification. If we construct scores of district electric power stations (we know where and how these can and should be constructed), if we transmit electric power from these to every village, if we obtain a sufficient number of electric motors and other machinery, we shall not need, or shall hardly need, transition stages, intermediary links between patriarchalism and Socialism. But we know perfectly well that at least ten years will be required to complete the first stage of this "one" condition, a reduction of this period is conceivable only if the proletarian revolution is victorious in such countries as England, Germany or America.

For the next few years we must learn to think of the intermediary links that can facilitate the transition from patriarchalism, from small production, to Socialism. "We" still often keep repeating the argument that "capitalism is evil, Socialism is good." But this argument is wrong, because it fails to take into account all the existing social economic formations and singles out only two of them.

Capitalism is evil compared with Socialism. Capitalism is good compared with mediaevalism, compared with small production, compared with bureaucracy, which is connected with the fact that the small producers are scattered. Inasmuch as we are as yet unable to pass directly from small production to Socialism, capitalism is inevitable to a certain degree as the elemental product of small production and exchange, and so, we must utilize capitalism (and in particular, direct it into the channels of state capitalism) as the intermediary link between small production and Socialism, as a means, a path, a method of increasing the productive forces.

Take the question of bureaucracy and glance at it from the economic aspect. On May 5, 1918, bureaucracy was not within our field of vision. Six months after the October Revolution, after we had smashed the old, bureaucratic apparatus from top to bottom, we did not yet feel this evil.

A year passed. At the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (March 18-23, 1919), a new Party program was adopted, and in this program we straightforwardly—not fearing to admit the evil, but desiring to reveal it, to expose it, to pillory it, to awaken the idea and will, energy and action to combat it—speak of *"a partial revival of bureaucracy in the Soviet system."*

Another two years passed. In the spring of 1921, after the Eighth Congress of Soviets (December 1920), which discussed the question of bureaucracy, and after the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (March 1921), which summed up the controversies that were closely connected with the analysis of bureaucracy, we see *this* evil confronting us more clearly, more distinctly and more menacingly. What are the economic roots of bureaucracy? There are two main roots: on the one hand,

a developed bourgeoisie needs a bureaucratic apparatus, primarily a military apparatus, and then a juridical apparatus, etc., to be used against the revolutionary movement of the workers (and partly of the peasants). This we have not got. Our courts are class courts directed against the bourgeoisie. Our army is a class army directed against the bourgeoisie. Bureaucracy does not exist in the army but in the institutions that serve it. Bureaucracy in this country has a different economic root, *viz.*, the atomized and dispersed character of small production, its poverty, lack of culture, absence of roads, illiteracy, absence of *exchange* between agriculture and industry, the absence of connection and interaction between them. To a large extent this is the result of the civil war. When we were blockaded, besieged on all sides, cut off from the whole world and from the grain-bearing South, from Siberia, from the coal fields, we could not restore industry. We had, unhesitatingly, to introduce "War Communism," to dare to go to the most desperate extremes: to suffer an existence of semi-starvation and worse than semi-starvation, but to hold on at all costs, in spite of unprecedented ruin and the absence of economic intercourse in order to save the workers' and peasants' government. We did not allow ourselves to be frightened by what frightened the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks (who in fact, to a large extent, followed the bourgeoisie out of fear, because they were frightened). But what was a condition of victory in a blockaded country, in a besieged fortress, revealed its negative side precisely in the spring of 1921, when the last of the Whiteguard forces were finally driven from the territory of the R.S.F.S.R. In the besieged fortress, it was possible and imperative to "lock up" all trade; with the masses displaying extraordinary heroism this could be borne for three years. After that, the ruin of the small producer still further increased, the restoration of large-scale industry was still further delayed, postponed. Bureaucracy, as a heritage of the "siege," as the superstructure of atomized and crushed small production, fully revealed itself.

We must learn to admit an evil fearlessly in order to combat it the more firmly, in order, again and again, to start from the beginning—we shall many times and in all spheres of our work have to start all over again from the beginning, to finish what was left undone and choose different methods of approach to the problem. There is obviously a delay in the restoration of large-scale production, and the "locking up" of exchange between industry and agriculture has become intolerable. Consequently, we must concentrate all efforts on what is more accessible—the restoration of small industry: helping things from that side, propping up that side of the structure that was half-demolished by the war and blockade. We must do everything possible to develop trade at all costs, without being afraid of capitalism, because the limits we have put to it (the expropriation of the landlords and of the bourgeoisie in economics, the rule of the workers and peasants in politics) are sufficiently narrow,

sufficiently "moderate" This is the fundamental idea of the tax in kind, this is its economic significance.

All Party and Soviet workers must concentrate all their efforts, all their attention, on creating, on rousing *the utmost local initiative in the* work of economic construction—in the provinces, still more in the uyezds, still more in the volosts and villages—precisely from the point of view of raising peasant farming immediately, even if by "small" means, on a small scale, helping it by developing small local industry The single national economic plan demands that precisely this should become the focus of attention and care, the focus of "urgency." The achievement of a certain amount of improvement here, closest to the broadest and deepest "foundation," will permit of the speediest transition to the more energetic and more successful restoration of large-scale industry.

Hitherto the food supply worker has known only one fundamental instruction· Collect the grain appropriations 100 per cent. Now he has another instruction Collect the tax 100 per cent in the shortest possible time and then collect another 100 per cent in exchange for the manufactures of large scale *and small* industry Those who collect 75 per cent of the tax and 75 per cent (of the second hundred) in exchange for the manufactures of large-scale and small industry will do more useful work of national importance than those who collect 100 per cent of the tax and 55 per cent (of the second hundred) by means of exchange The task of the food supply worker now becomes more complicated On the one hand, it becomes a fiscal task Collect the tax as quickly and as rationally as possible On the other hand, it is a general economic task: Try to direct the co-operatives, assist small industry, develop local initiative in such a way as to increase the exchange between agriculture and industry and make it durable. We still do this very badly, the existence of bureaucracy is proof of this. We must not be afraid to admit that here *we can and must learn a great deal from the capitalist* We shall compare the practical experience of the various provinces, uyezds, volosts and villages. in one place private capitalists, big and little, have achieved so much, their profits are approximately so much. This is tribute, the fee we pay "for tuition" We shall not mind paying for this tuition if only we learn something In the neighbouring locality so much and so much has been achieved by co operative methods The profits of the co operatives are so much And in a third place, by purely state, by purely Communist methods, *so much and so much has been achieved (in the present period this third* case will be a rare exception).

The task should be for every Regional economic centre, for every Provincial Economic Conference convened by the Executive Committee, to organize immediately, as a primary task, various experiments, or systems of "exchange" with the surplus stocks that remain after the tax in kind has been paid. In a few months' time practical results must be obtained for comparison and study. Local or imported salt, kerosene from

the centre; the handicraft wood-working industry; handicrafts using local raw materials and producing certain, not very important, perhaps, but nevertheless necessary and useful articles for the peasants; "white coal" (the utilization of small local water power resources for electrification), and so on and so forth—all this must be set going in order to stimulate exchange between industry and agriculture at all costs. Those who achieve the best results in this sphere, even by means of private capitalism, even without the co-operatives, without directly transforming this capitalism into state capitalism, will do more for the cause of all-Russian Socialist construction than those who will "ponder over" the purity of Communism, draw up regulations, rules and instructions for state capitalism and the co-operatives, but do nothing practical to stimulate trade.

Private capital in the role of accomplice of Socialism—does that not seem paradoxical?

It is not paradoxical in the least; it is an irrefutable economic fact. Since we are dealing with a small-peasant country in which transport is in an extreme state of dislocation, a country which has just emerged from war and blockade, which is politically guided by the proletariat—which controls the transport system and large-scale industry—it inevitably follows, firstly, that local exchange acquires first-class significance at the present moment, and, secondly, that the possibility exists of assisting Socialism by means of private capitalism (not to speak of state capitalism).

Less argument about words! We still have too much of this sort of thing. More variety in practical experience and more study of this experience! Under certain circumstances the exemplary organization of local work, even on the smallest scale, is of far greater national importance than many branches of central state work. And these are precisely the circumstances we are in at the present moment in regard to peasant farming in general, and in regard to the exchange of the surplus products of agriculture for the manufactures of industry in particular. Exemplary organization in this respect, even in a single volost, is of far greater national importance than the "exemplary" improvement of the central apparatus of any People's Commissariat; for our central apparatus has been built up during the past three and a half years to such an extent that it has managed to acquire a certain amount of harmful inertness; we cannot improve it quickly to any extent, we do not know how to do it. Assistance in the work of radically improving it, in securing an influx of fresh forces, in combating bureaucracy effectively and in overcoming this harmful inertness, must come from the localities, from the lower ranks, with the exemplary organization of something "whole," even if on a small scale. I say "whole" advisedly, *i.e.*, not one industry, not one branch of industry, not one factory, but the *sum total* of economic relations, the *sum total* of economic exchange, even if only in a small locality.

Tho e of us who are doomed to remain on work at the centre will continue the task of improving the apparatus and purging it of bureaucracy, even if in modest and immediately achievable dimensions But the greatest assistance in this task is coming, and will come, from the localities. Generally speaking, as far as I can observe, things are better in the localities than at the centre, and this is understandable, for, naturally, the evil of bureaucracy concentrates at the centre In this respect Moscow cannot but be the worst city, and in general the worst "place," in the republic In the localities we have deviations from the average to the good and the bad sides, the latter being less frequent than the former The deviation to the bad side is shown by the abuses committed by former government officials, landlords, bourgeois and other scum who have attached themselves to the Communists and who sometimes commit abominable outrages and acts of tyranny against the peasantry Here there must be a terroristic purging, summary trial and the firing squad Let the Martovs, the Chernovs, and non party philistines like them, beat their breasts and exclaim "I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not as one of 'these', that I have never recognized, nor do I recognize, terror" These simpletons "do not recognize terror" because they chose for themselves the role of servile accomplices of the Whiteguards in fooling the workers and peasants. The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks "do not recognize terror" because under the flag of "Socialism" they are fulfilling their function of *placing the masses at the mercy of the Whiteguard terror* This was proved by the Kerensky regime and the Kornilov putsch in Russia, by the Kolchak regime in Siberia, by Menshevism in Georgia It was proved by the heroes of the Second International and of the "Two and a Half" International in Finland, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Italy, England, etc Let the flunkey accomplices of Whiteguard terror praise themselves for repudiating all terror We shall speak the bitter and undoubted truth· in countries that are experiencing an unprecedented crisis, the collapse of old ties, and the intensification of the class struggle after the imperialist war of 1914 18—and such are all the countries of the world—terror cannot be dispensed with notwithstanding the hypocrites and phrasemongers Either the Whiteguard, bourgeois terror of the American, British (Ireland), Italian (the fascists), German, Hungarian and other types, or Red proletarian terror There is no middle course, no "third" course, nor can there be

The deviation towards the good side is shown by the success achieved in combating bureaucracy, by the solicitude shown for the needs of the workers and peasants, the great care devoted to developing the national economy, raising the productivity of labour and developing local exchange between agriculture and industry Although the good examples are more numerous than the bad ones, they are, nevertheless, too rare. Still, they are there New, young, fresh Communist forces, tempered by civil war and privations are coming forward in all localities. We are

still doing far too little to promote these forces systematically from lower to higher positions. This can and must be done more persistently, and on a wider scale than at present. On the other hand, some workers can and should be transferred from work at the centre to local work. As leading men of uyezds, and even of *volosts*, where they can organize economic work as a *whole*, on *exemplary* lines, they will do far more good, and perform work of far greater *national* importance, than by performing certain functions at the centre. The organization of the work on exemplary lines will help to train new workers, and provide examples that other districts could follow with relative ease. We at the centre could do a great deal to encourage the other districts all over the country to "follow" the good examples, and even make it obligatory for them to do so.

By its very nature, the work of developing "exchange" between agriculture and industry, the exchange of the surpluses, left over after the tax in kind is paid, for the output of small, mainly handicraft, industry, calls for independent, competent and wise *local initiative*. That is why it is now exceptionally important from the national point of view to organize the work in the uyezds and volosts on exemplary lines. In military affairs, during the last Polish war, for example, we were not afraid of departing from the principle of a bureaucratic hierarchy, we were not afraid of "reducing in rank," of transferring members of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic to lower posts (while retaining their higher posts at the centre). Why not now transfer several members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, or members of collegiums, or other highly placed comrades, to uyezd or even volost work? Surely we have not become so "bureaucratized" as to "be ashamed" to do that. Surely we shall find scores of workers in central bodies who would willingly agree to this. The economic development of the whole republic will gain by this enormously; and the exemplary volosts, or exemplary uyezds, will play not only a great, but a positively decisive, historic role.

By the way. As a small but nevertheless significant circumstance note should be taken of the necessary change in the principle of combating profiteering. We must foster "proper" trade, trade that does not evade state control; it is to our advantage to develop this sort of trade. But profiteering, taken in its political and economic sense, *cannot* be distinguished from "proper" trade. Free trade is capitalism; capitalism is profiteering. It would be ridiculous to close our eyes to this.

What should we do? Declare profiteering to be unpunishable?

No. We must revise and redraft all the laws on profiteering, and declare all *thieving* and every direct or indirect, open or concealed *evasion of state control, supervision and accounting* to be a punishable offense (and in fact prosecute it with trebled severity). It is precisely by presenting the question in this way (the Council of People's Commissars has already started, that is to say, the Council of People's Commissars has ordered

that work be started, on the revision of the anti-profiteering laws) that we shall succeed in directing the inevitable, and to a certain extent necessary, development of capitalism into the channels of *state* capitalism.

POLITICAL SUMMARY AND DEDUCTIONS

I still have to touch, if briefly, upon the political situation, on the way it arose and changed in connection with the economic developments I have outlined above.

I have already said that the fundamental features of our economics in 1921 are the same as those existing in 1918 In the spring of 1921, mainly as a result of the failure of the harvest and the dying off of cattle, the condition of the peasantry, extremely bad already as a consequence of the war and blockade, became very much worse This resulted in political vacillation which, generally speaking, expresses the very "nature" of the small producer. The most striking expression of this vacillation was the Kronstadt mutiny.

The most characteristic feature of the Kronstadt events was precisely the vacillation of the petty bourgeois element There was very little that was fully formulated, clear and definite. We heard nebulous slogans about "liberty," "free trade," "emancipation," "Soviets without the Bolsheviks," or new elections to the Soviets, or relief from "Party dictatorship," and so on and so forth Both the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries declared the Kronstadt movement to be "their own" Victor Chernov sent a runner to Kronstadt on the proposal of this runner the Menshevik Valk, one of the Kronstadt leaders, voted for the *Constituent Assembly*. In a flash, with radio telegraphic speed, one might say, the Whiteguards mobilized all their forces *"for Kronstadt."* The Whiteguard military experts in Kronstadt, a number of experts, and not Kozlovsky alone, drew up a plan for landing forces at Oranienbaum, a plan which frightened the vacillating Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary and non-party masses More than fifty Russian Whiteguard newspapers published abroad conducted a raging campaign *"for Kronstadt."* The big banks, all the forces of finance capital, collected funds to assist Kronstadt. That shrewd leader of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, the Cadet Milyukov, patiently explained to the simpleton Victor Chernov directly (and to the Mensheviks Dan and Rozhkov, who are in jail in Petrograd for their connection with the Kronstadt events, indirectly) that they need be in no hurry with their Constituent Assembly, and that they *can and should support the Soviet government—only without the Bolsheviks.*

Of course, it is easy to be cleverer than conceited simpletons like Chernov, the hero of petty-bourgeois phrases, or like Martov, the knight of philistine reformism painted to look like "Marxism." Properly speaking, the point is not that Milyukov, as an individual, is cleverer, but that

small producers, the peasants, are economically *and politically* united either by the bourgeoisie (this has always been the case under capitalism in all countries, in all revolutions of modern times, and so it will always be under capitalism), or by the proletariat (that was the case in a rudimentary form for short periods at the peak of some of the greatest revolutions in modern history, that has been the case in Russia in a more developed form in 1917-21). Only conceited Narcissuses can chatter and dream about a "third" path, about a "third" force.

With enormous difficulty, and in the midst of desperate struggles, the Bolsheviks have trained a proletarian vanguard that is capable of governing, and they have created and successfully defended the dictatorship of the proletariat. After the test of four years of practical experience, the relation of class forces in Russia has become as clear as can be: the steeled and tempered vanguard of the only revolutionary class, the petty-bourgeois vacillating element, and the Milyukovs, the capitalists and landlords, hiding abroad and supported by the world bourgeoisie. Clearly, only the latter can benefit by any "shifting of power."

In the above quoted pamphlet of 1918 this point was put very clearly: "The principal enemy" is the "petty bourgeois element." "Either we subordinate them to our control and supervision or they will overthrow our workers' government as surely and as inevitably as the revolution was overthrown by the Napoleons and Cavaignacs who sprang from this very soil of small ownership. This is how the question stands. It can stand in no other way." (Excerpt from the pamphlet of May 5, 1918, *cf.* above.)

Our strength lies in complete clarity and the sober calculation of *all* the existing class forces, Russian and international, and it also lies in the iron energy, firmness, determination and devotion in struggle that arise from this. We have many enemies, but they are disunited, or else they do not know what they want (like all the petty bourgeoisie, all the Martovs and Chernovs, all the non-party people, all the anarchists). But we are united—directly among ourselves and indirectly with the proletarians of all countries, we know what we want. That is why we are invincible all over the world, although this does not in the least preclude the possibility of the defeat of individual proletarian revolutions for longer or shorter periods.

It is not for nothing that the petty bourgeois element is called an element, for it is indeed something that is most amorphous, indefinite and unconscious. The petty bourgeois Narcissuses think that "universal suffrage" abolishes the nature of the small producer under capitalism. As a matter of fact it *helps* the bourgeoisie with the aid of the church, the press, the teachers, the police, the militarists and a thousand and one forms of economic oppression, helps it to *subordinate* the scattered small producers to itself. Ruin, want and hard conditions of life give rise to vacillation: one day for the bourgeoisie, another day for the proletariat. The steeled

assistants, arrange to have their work checked up from below, *i.e.*, by the real masses. They should *direct* the work and *learn* from those who have knowledge (the experts) and experience in organizing large-scale production (the capitalists). A wise Communist will not be afraid of learning from a military expert, although nine-tenths of the military experts are capable of treachery of every opportunity. A wise Communist will not be afraid of learning from a capitalist (no matter whether that capitalist is a big capitalist concessionaire, or a commission agent, or a little capitalist co-operator, etc.), although the capitalist is no better than the military expert. Did we not in the Red Army learn to catch treacherous military experts, to single out the honest and conscientious, and, on the whole, to utilize thousands and tens of thousands of military experts? We are learning to do the same (in a special way) with engineers and teachers, although we are doing it much worse than we did it in the Red Army (there Denikin and Kolchak whipped us up, compelled us to learn more quickly, more diligently and more intelligently). We shall learn to do the same (again in a special way) with the commission agents, with the buyers who are working for the state, with the little co-operator-capitalists, with the entrepreneur concessionaires, etc.

The conditions of the masses of workers and peasants must be improved immediately. By putting new forces, including non-Party forces, to useful work, we shall achieve this. The tax in kind, and a number of measures connected with it, will facilitate this. By this we shall cut the economic root of the inevitable vacillations of the small producer. As for political vacillations which only benefit Milyukov, we shall fight them ruthlessly. The waverers are many, we are few. The waverers are disunited, we are united. The waverers are not economically independent, the proletariat is. The waverers do not know what they want: they want to, and would like to, but Milyukov won't let them. We know what we want.

And that is why we shall win.

CONCLUSION

To sum up.

The tax in kind is a transition from War Communism to the proper Socialist exchange of products.

The extreme ruin rendered more acute by the failure of the harvest in 1920 made this transition urgently necessary owing to the fact that it was impossible to restore large scale industry rapidly.

Hence, the first thing to do is to improve the conditions of the peasants. The means to this are the tax in kind, the development of exchange between agriculture and industry, the development of small industry.

Exchange is free trade, it is capitalism. It is useful to us inasmuch as it will help us to overcome the scatteredness of the small producer, and to a certain degree to combat bureaucracy; to what extent will be determined by

practical experience. The proletarian regime is in no danger as long as the proletariat firmly holds power in its hands, as long as it firmly holds transport and large-scale industry in its hands.

The fight against profiteering must be transformed into a fight against *larceny and against the evasion of state supervision, accounting and control*. By means of this control we shall direct capitalism, which is inevitable and to a certain extent necessary for us, into the channels of state capitalism.

The fullest scope must be given for the development of local initiative and independent action in encouraging exchange between agriculture and industry—this must be done to the utmost extent and at all costs. The experience gained in this must be studied; and this experience must be made as varied as possible.

Assistance for small industry which serves peasant agriculture and helps to improve it; to some extent this assistance may be given in the form of *raw materials from state* stocks. The *most criminal thing would be to leave* these raw materials unused.

We must not be afraid of Communists "learning" from bourgeois specialists, including merchants, small capitalist co-operators and capitalists; of learning from them in the same way as we learnt from the military experts, though in a different form. The results of what is "learnt" must be tested only by practical experience: do things better than the bourgeois specialists at your side; try every way to secure an improvement in agriculture and industry, and to develop exchange between them. Do not begrudge the price for "tuition": no price for tuition will be too high if only we learn intelligently.

Do everything to help the masses of the working people, to come closer to them, to promote from their ranks hundreds and thousands of non-party people for the work of economic administration. But those "non-party" people who are nothing more nor less than Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries disguised in fashionable, non-party attire, *à la* Kronstadt, should be carefully kept in prison, or packed off to Berlin, to Martov, so that they may freely enjoy all the charms of pure democracy and freely exchange ideas with Chernov, Milyukov and the Georgian Mensheviks.

April 21, 1921

Published as a separate
pamphlet in May 1921

THESES OF REPORT ON THE TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY TO THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

(PRELIMINARY DRAFT)

1 THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF THE R S F S R

The international position of the R S F S R at the present moment is distinguished by a certain equilibrium, which, although it is extremely unstable, has given rise to a peculiar state of affairs in world politics.

What constitutes this peculiarity is that, on the one hand, the international bourgeoisie is filled with furious hatred of, and hostility towards, Soviet Russia, and is prepared at any moment to fling itself upon her in order to strangle her On the other hand, all attempts at military intervention, which have cost the international bourgeoisie hundreds of millions of francs, have ended in complete failure, in spite of the fact that the Soviet regime was then weaker than it is now and that the Russian landlords and capitalists had whole armies on the territory of the R S F S R The opposition to the war on Soviet Russia has become extremely strong in all capitalist countries, it is adding fuel to the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and extending to very wide sections of the petty bourgeois democracy. The conflict of interests between the various imperialist countries has become acute, and is growing more acute every day. The revolutionary movement among the hundreds of millions of oppressed peoples of the East is growing with remarkable vigour. The result of all these conditions is that international imperialism has proved itself unable to strangle Soviet Russia, although it is far stronger than she is, and has been obliged for the time being to grant her recognition, or semi recognition, and to conclude trade agreements with her.

The result is a state of equilibrium which, although extremely unstable and uncertain, enables the Socialist Republic to exist—not for long, of course—within the capitalist encirclement.

2. THE INTERNATIONAL ALIGNMENT OF CLASS FORCES

This state of affairs has given rise to the following international alignment of class forces:

The international bourgeoisie, deprived of the opportunity of waging open war against Soviet Russia, is waiting and watching for the moment when circumstances will permit it to resume this war.

The proletariat in all the advanced capitalist countries has already formed its vanguard, the Communist parties, which are growing, making steady progress towards winning the majority of the proletariat in each country, destroying the influence of the old trade union bureaucrats and of the upper stratum of the working class of America and Europe, which has been corrupted by imperialist privileges.

The petty-bourgeois democrats in the capitalist countries, whose foremost sections are represented by the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, serve today as the mainstay of capitalism, since they still influence the majority, or a large section, of the industrial and commercial workers and office employees who are afraid that if revolution breaks out they will lose the relative, petty-bourgeois prosperity provided for them by the privileges of imperialism. But the growing economic crisis is everywhere worsening the conditions of the broad masses, and this, with the growing inevitability of new imperialist wars if capitalism is preserved, is steadily weakening this mainstay.

The masses of the working people in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe, were roused to political life as early as the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly by the revolutions in Russia, Turkey, Persia and China. The imperialist war of 1914-18 and the Soviet regime in Russia is completing the process of converting these masses into active factors in world politics and in the revolutionary destruction of imperialism, although the educated philistines of Europe and America, including the leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, stubbornly refuse to see this. British India is at the head of these countries, and there revolution is maturing in proportion to the growth of the industrial and railway proletariat, on the one hand, and to the increase in the brutal terrorism of the British—who are more and more frequently resorting to massacres (Amritsar), public floggings, etc.—on the other.

3. THE ALIGNMENT OF CLASS FORCES IN RUSSIA

The internal political situation in Soviet Russia is determined by the fact that here, for the first time in the world history, we have for a number of years only two classes: the proletariat, trained for decades by a very young, but modern, large-scale machine industry; and the small peasantry, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population.

The big landowners and capitalists in Russia have not vanished, but they have been completely expropriated and utterly crushed politically, as a class, remnants of which are hiding in the ranks of the Soviet government employees. They have preserved their class organization abroad, as emigres, numbering probably from 1,500,000 to 2,000,000 possessing over fifty daily newspapers of all bourgeois and "Socialist" (i e , petty-bourgeois) parties, the remnants of an army, and numerous connections with the international bourgeoisie These emigres are striving with all their might and main to destroy the Soviet regime and restore capitalism in Russia.

4. THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY IN RUSSIA

In view of this internal situation in Russia, the main task that now confronts her proletariat, as the ruling class, is properly to determine and carry out the measures that are necessary to lead the peasantry, to establish a firm alliance with them, to achieve the transition, in a series of gradual stages, to *large scale*, collective, mechanized agriculture. This is a particularly difficult task in Russia in view of the backwardness of our country, as well as the extreme state of ruin she is in as a result of seven years of imperialist and civil war. But apart from these specific circumstances, this is one of the most difficult tasks of Socialist construction that will confront all capitalist countries, with the only exception of England, perhaps. But even in regard to England it must not be forgotten that, while the small tenant farmers there constitute only a very small class, the percentage of workers and office employees who enjoy a petty bourgeois standard of living, thanks to the actual enslavement of hundreds of millions of people in England's colonial "possessions," is exceptionally high.

Hence, from the point of view of the development of the world proletarian revolution as a single process, the significance of the epoch Russia is passing through lies in the fact that it provides the means of testing and verifying in practice the policy of the proletariat in power towards the masses of the petty bourgeoisie.

5. THE MILITARY ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE PROLETARIAT AND PEASANTRY IN THE R.S.F.S.R.

The basis for proper relations between the proletariat and the peasantry in Soviet Russia was created in the period of 1917-21 when the invasion of the capitalists and landlords, supported by the whole world bourgeoisie and all the petty-bourgeois democratic parties (Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks) caused the proletariat and the peasantry to form, sign and seal a military alliance to defend the Soviet regime. Civil war is the most intense form of class war, but the more intense this war is, the more rapidly are all petty-bourgeois illusions and prejudices consumed in its flames, and the more clearly experience proves even to the most backward strata of the peasantry that only the dictatorship of the proletariat can save it, that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are actually merely the flunkeys of the landlords and capitalists.

But while the military alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry was—and had to be—the primary form of their firm alliance, it could not have been maintained even for a few weeks without some sort of an economic alliance between the two classes. The peasants received from the workers' state all the land, and protection against the landlords and the kulaks; the workers have been receiving from the peasants loans of food supplies until large-scale industry is restored.

6. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROPER ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY

The alliance between the small peasants and the proletariat can become quite regular and stable from the Socialist point of view only when the complete restoration of the transport system and large-scale industry enables the proletariat to give the peasants in exchange for food all the manufactures they need for their own use for the purpose of improving their farms. Owing to the utter ruin of the country, this could not possibly be achieved at once. The surplus-appropriation system was the best measure that the insufficiently organized state had at hand to maintain itself in the midst of an unprecedentedly arduous war against the landlords. The failure of the grain and the fodder shortage in 1920 increased the hardships of the peasantry, severe as they were already, and made the immediate adoption of the tax in kind imperative.

The moderate tax in kind will immediately bring about a considerable improvement in the conditions of the peasantry, and will at the same time stimulate them to enlarge their area of cultivation and improve their methods of farming.

The tax in kind marks the transition from the requisition of all the peasants' surplus grain to regular Socialist exchange of the products of industry and agriculture.

7. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT PERMITTING CAPITALISM AND CONCESSIONS AND THE TERMS ON WHICH IT CAN DO SO

Naturally, the tax in kind means freedom for the peasant to dispose of his surplus at his own discretion after he has paid the tax Since the state cannot provide the peasant with manufactures from the Socialist factories in exchange for all his surplus, freedom to trade with this surplus necessarily means freedom for the development of capitalism.

Within the limits indicated, however, this is not at all dangerous for Socialism as long as the transport system and large scale industry remain in the hands of the proletariat On the contrary, the development of capitalism, controlled and regulated by the proletarian state (i e, "state" capitalism in *this* sense of the term) is advantageous and necessary in an utterly ruined and backward small peasant country (within certain limits of course), since it can hasten the *immediate* revival of peasant farming This applies still more to concessions without denationalizing anything, the workers' state leases certain mines, forest sections, oilfields, and so forth, to foreign capitalists in order to obtain from them extra equipment and machinery that will enable us to accelerate the restoration of Soviet large scale industry

The payment made to the concessionaires in the form of a share of the extremely valuable products obtained is undoubtedly tribute, which the workers' state pays to the world bourgeoisie, without glossing this over in the slightest degree, we must clearly realize that we stand to gain by paying this tribute, if it accelerates the restoration of our large scale industry and greatly improves the conditions of the workers and peasants.

8 THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR FOOD POLICY

The food policy pursued by Soviet Russia in 1917 21 was undoubtedly crude and imperfect, and gave rise to many abuses A number of mistakes were made in carrying out this policy But taken on the whole, it was the only policy that could have been adopted under the conditions prevailing. And it fulfilled its historical mission it saved the proletarian dictatorship in a ruined and backward country It is an incontrovertible fact that it was gradually improved. In the first year that we were fully in

power (Aug. 1, 1918 to Aug. 1, 1919) the state collected 110,000,000 poods of grain; in the second year it collected 220,000,000 poods and in the third year—over 285,000,000 poods.

Now, having acquired practical experience, we have set out, and expect, to collect 400,000,000 poods (the tax in kind is estimated to bring in 240,000,000 poods). Only when it is actually in possession of an adequate stock of food will the workers' state be able economically to stand firmly on its own feet, secure the steady, if slow, restoration of large-scale industry and create a proper financial system.

9. THE MATERIAL BASIS OF SOCIALISM AND THE PLAN FOR THE ELECTRIFICATION OF RUSSIA

The only material basis that is possible for Socialism is large-scale machine industry that is capable of reorganizing agriculture. But we cannot confine ourselves to this general thesis. It must be made more concrete. Modern large-scale industry, capable of reorganizing agriculture, means the electrification of the whole country. We had to undertake the scientific work of drawing up such a plan for the electrification of the R.S.F.S.R. and we have accomplished it. With the co-operation of over two hundred of the best scientists, engineers and agronomists in Russia, this work is now completed and published in a large volume and was, on the whole, endorsed by the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets in December 1920. Arrangements have now been made to convene an all-Russian congress of electrical engineers in August 1921 which will examine this plan in detail, after which the government will finally endorse it. The execution of the first part of the electrification scheme is estimated to take ten years. It will require an aggregate of about 370,000,000 worker-days.

In 1918, we had eight newly erected power stations (with a total capacity of 4,757 kw.); in 1919 the figure rose to 36 (total capacity of 1,648 kw.) and in 1920 it rose to 100 (total capacity 8,699 kw.).

Modest as this beginning is for our vast country, nevertheless, a start has been made, work has begun and is making steady progress. After the imperialist war, after millions of prisoners of war in Germany had become familiar with modern up-to-date technique, after the stern and hardening experience of three years of civil war, the Russian peasant is not what he was in the old days. Month after month he sees more clearly and more vividly that only the leadership of the proletariat is capable of leading the masses of small farmers out of capitalist slavery to Socialism.

10 THE ROLE OF "PURE DEMOCRACY," THE SECOND AND TWO AND A HALF INTERNATIONALS, THE SOCIALIST-REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE MENSHEVIKS AS THE ALLIES OF CAPITAL

The dictatorship of the proletariat does not signify the cessation of the class struggle, but its continuation in a new form and with new weapons This dictatorship is essential as long as classes exist, as long as the bourgeoisie, overthrown in one country, intensifies tenfold its attacks on Socialism on an international scale In the transition period, the small farmer class cannot help being a vacillating class The difficulties accompanying the transition, and the influence of the bourgeoisie, inevitably *cause vacillation in the moods of these masses from time to time* Upon the proletariat, enfeebled and to a certain extent declassed by the destruction of large scale machine industry, its vital foundation, devolves the extremely difficult, but great historical duty of holding out in spite of these vacillations, and of carrying its cause of emancipating labour from the yoke of capital to victory

The political expression of the vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie *is the policy pursued by the petty bourgeois democratic parties*, *i e*, the parties affiliated to the Second and Two and a Half Internationals, represented in Russia by the S -R ("Socialist-Revolutionaries") and Menshevik parties Having their headquarters and newspapers abroad now, these parties are actually in a bloc with the whole of the bourgeois counter revolution, and are rendering it loyal service.

The shrewd leaders of the Russian big bourgeoisie headed by Milyukov, the leader of the 'Cadet" ("Constitutional Democratic") party, have quite clearly, definitely and openly appraised this role of the petty bourgeois democrats, *i e*, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks In connection with the Kronstadt revolt, in which the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Whiteguards joined forces, Milyukov expressed his agreement with the slogan "Soviets without Bolsheviks" Amplifying this idea, he wrote that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks deserve "honour and place" (*Pravda*, No 64, 1921, quoted from the Paris *Poslednije Novosti*), because upon them devolves the *first* task, *viz* of *dislodging the Bolsheviks from power* Milyukov, the leader of the big bourgeoisie, has thoroughly learnt the lesson taught by all revolutions, namely, that the petty bourgeois democrats are incapable of holding power, and always serve merely as a screen for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, merely as a stepping stone to the unrestricted power of the bourgeoisie

The proletarian revolution in Russia once again confirms this lesson of 1789 94 and 1848 49, confirms what Frederick Engels said in his letter to Bebel of December 11, 1884, about the subordinate role of pure democracy, *viz*, that it "does not prevent the possibility, when the moment

of revolution comes, of its [pure democracy] acquiring a temporary importance . . . *as the final sheet anchor of the whole bourgeois and even feudal regime*. . . . Thus, between March and September 1848 the whole feudal-bureaucratic mass strengthened the liberals *in order to hold down the revolutionary masses*. . . . In any case *our sole adversary* on the day of the crisis and on the day after the crisis *will be the whole collective reaction which will group itself around pure democracy*, and this, I think, should not be lost sight of." (Published in Russian in *Kommunistichesky Trud*, No. 360, June 9, 1921, in an article by Comrade V. Adoratsky: "Marx and Engels on Democracy." In German, published in the book: Frederick Engels, *Politisches Vermächtnis*, Internationale Jugend-Bibliothek, No. 12, Berlin 1920, S. 19.)

Moscow, Kremlin,
June 13, 1921

Published as a separate
pamphlet in 1921

NEW TIMES AND OLD MISTAKES IN A NEW GUISE

Every specific turn in history causes some change in the form of the petty bourgeois wavering which always occurs alongside the proletariat, and which to some degree always penetrates its ranks

These waverings flow in two "streams" petty bourgeois reformism, i e, servility to the bourgeoisie covered by a cloak of sentimental, democratic and "Social" Democratic phrases and pious wishes, and petty bourgeois revolutionariness—menacing, blustering and boastful in words, but a mere bubble of disunity, disruption and brainlessness in deeds These waverings will inevitably occur until the tap root of capitalism is cut, their form is now changing owing to the change that is taking place in the economic policy of the Soviet government

The Mensheviks' *leit motif* is "The Bolsheviks have reverted to capitalism, now they are done for After all, the revolution, including the October revolution, is a bourgeois revolution! Long live democracy! Long live reformism!" Whether this is said in the purely Menshevik spirit, in the spirit of the Socialist Revolutionaries, in the spirit of the Second International or in the spirit of the Two and a Half International, it amounts to the same thing

The *leit motif* of the semi anarchists, such as the German "Communist *Labour* Party" or of that section of our former Workers' Opposition which has left or is leaving the Party, is "The Bolsheviks have lost faith in the working class" The slogans they deduce from this are more or less akin to the Kronstadt slogans of the spring of 1921

In contrast to the whining and panic of the philistines of reformism and of the philistines of revolutionariness, the Marxist must as soberly and as precisely as possible weigh up the alignment of actual class forces and the incontrovertible facts

Let us recall the main stages of our revolution The first stage the purely political stage, so to speak, from October 25 to January 5, to the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly In a matter of ten weeks we did a hundred times more to actually and completely destroy the survivals of feudalism in Russia than the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries did during the eight months *they* were in power—from February to October 1917 At that time the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries in Russia, and all the heroes of the Two and a Half International abroad, acted

as the vile accomplices of reaction. As for the anarchists, some stood aloof in perplexity, while others helped us. Was the revolution a bourgeois revolution at that time? Of course it was, in so far as our function was to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution, in so far as there was as yet no class struggle among the peasantry." But at the same time we put in a vast amount of work *over and above* the bourgeois revolution *for* the Socialist, proletarian revolution: 1) we developed the forces of the *working class* in utilizing state power to an extent never achieved before; 2) we struck a blow that was felt all over the world against the fetishes of petty-bourgeois democracy, *i.e.*, the Constituent Assembly and bourgeois "liberties" such as freedom of the press for the rich; 3) we created the Soviet *type* of state, which was a gigantic step in advance of 1793 and 1871.

The second stage: the Brest-Litovsk Peace. There was a riot of revolutionary phrasemongering against peace—the semi-jingo phrasemongering of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and the "Left" phrasemongering of a certain section of the Bolsheviks. "You have made peace with imperialism; you are therefore doomed," argued the philistines, some in panic and some with malicious glee. As a matter of fact it was the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks who had made peace with imperialism, for they had participated in the bourgeois robbery of the workers. We "made peace" with the robbers, surrendering part of our property to them only in order to save the workers' regime, and in order to be able to strike heavier blows at the robbers later on. At that time we heard quite a lot of talk about our having "lost faith in the forces of the working class"; but we did not allow ourselves to be deceived by it.

The third stage: the Civil War from the Czechoslovaks and supporters of the Constituent Assembly to Wrangel; 1918 to 1920. At the beginning of the war our Red Army did not yet exist. As a material force, this army is still insignificant compared with the army of any of the Entente powers. Nevertheless, we emerged victorious from the struggle against that world power, the Entente. The alliance between the peasants and the workers led by the proletarian state—this achievement of world-historical importance—was raised to an unprecedented level. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries acted as the accomplices of the monarchy openly (as Ministers, organizers and propagandists) and covertly (the more "subtle" and despicable method adopted by the Chernovs and Martovs, who pretended to wash their hands of the affair but actually used their pens against us). The anarchists rushed about helplessly, one section of them helping us, while another section hindered us by their clamour against military discipline, or by their scepticism.

The fourth stage: the Entente is compelled to cease (for how long?) its intervention and blockade. Our incredibly ruined country is just barely beginning to recover, is only just realizing the full depth of its ruin, is suffering terrible hardships; industry is at a standstill, the crop has failed, starvation and epidemics prevail.

We have risen to the highest and at the same time the most difficult stage of our world historical struggle. The enemy that is facing us at the present moment, and in the present period, is not the enemy that faced us yesterday The enemy now is not the gang of Whiteguards commanded by the landlords and assisted by all the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and by the whole international bourgeoisie. The enemy now is every day economics in a small peasant country with a ruined large-scale industry The enemy is the petty bourgeois element which surrounds us like the air, and penetrates deep into the ranks of the proletariat The proletariat is declassed, i e, dislodged from its class groove The factories and works are idle—the proletariat is weak, scattered, enfeebled. The petty-bourgeois element in the country is backed by the whole international bourgeoisie, which is still world powerful.

Is this not enough to make people quail, especially heroes like the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the knights of the Two-and-a-Half International, the helpless anarchists and the lovers of "Left" phrases? "The Bolsheviks are reverting to capitalism, the Bolsheviks are done for. Their revolution, too, has not gone beyond the limits of a bourgeois revolution." We hear quite enough yelling of this sort.

But we have grown accustomed to it.

We do not minimize the dangers We look them straight in the face. We say to the workers and peasants The danger is great, more solidarity, more endurance, more coolness· kick the pro Menshevik and pro-Socialist-Revolutionary panicmongers and tub thumpers out with contempt.

The danger is great Today the enemy is far stronger than we are economically, just as yesterday he was far stronger than we were militarily. We know that; and in that knowledge lies our strength. We have already done so much to purge Russia of feudalism, to develop all the forces of the workers and the peasants, we have already done so much for the world-wide struggle against imperialism and for the international proletarian movement freed from the banalities and meanness of the Second and Two-and a-Half Internationals that *panic-stricken cries no longer affect us.* We have more than fully "justified" our revolutionary activity, and we have shown the whole world by our deeds what proletarian revolutionariness is capable of in contrast to Menshevik Socialist-Revolutionary "democracy" and timid reformism decked with pompous phrases.

Any one who fears defeat on the eve of battle can call himself a Socialist only out of sheer mockery of the workers.

It is precisely because we are not afraid to look danger in the face that we make the best use of our forces for the struggle—we weigh up the chances more dispassionately, cautiously and shrewdly—we make every concession that will strengthen us and break up the forces of the enemy (now even the biggest fool can see that the "Brest Peace" was a concession that strengthened us and broke up the forces of international imperialism).

The Mensheviks are shouting that the tax in kind, free trade, the grant-

ing of concessions and state capitalism signify the collapse of Communism. Abroad, the voice of the ex-Communist Levi has been added to that of the Mensheviks. This same Levi had to be defended as long as his mistakes could be attributed to his reaction to the mistakes of the "Left" Communists, particularly in March 1921 in Germany;* but this same Levi cannot be defended when, instead of admitting that he is wrong, he slips into Menshevism all along the line.

We shall simply point out to the clamorous Mensheviks that even in the spring of 1918 the Communists proclaimed and advocated a *bloc*, an alliance with state capitalism against the petty-bourgeois element. This was three years ago! In the first months of the Bolsheviks' victory! Even then the Bolsheviks took a sober view of things. And since then nobody has been able to challenge the correctness of our sober calculation of the available forces.

Levi, who has slipped into Menshevism, advises us Bolsheviks (whose defeat by capitalism he "forecasts" in the same way as all the philistines, democrats, Social-Democrats and others forecast our doom if we dissolved the Constituent Assembly!) to appeal for the aid of the *whole* of the working class! Because, if you please, up to now only *part* of the working class has been helping us!

What Levi says here very remarkably coincides with what is said by those semi-anarchists and tub-thumpers, and also by certain members of the former "Workers' Opposition," who are so fond of talking large about the Bolsheviks now having "lost faith in the forces of the working class." Both the Mensheviks and those with anarchist leanings convert the concept "forces of the working class" into a fetish; they are incapable of grasping its actual, concrete meaning. Instead of studying and analysing its meaning, they declaim.

The gentlemen of the Two-and-a-Half International pose as revolutionaries; but in every serious situation they prove to be counter-revolutionaries, because they shrink from the violent destruction of the old state machine; because they have no faith in the forces of the working class. It was not a mere catchphrase we uttered when we said this about the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Co. Everybody knows that the October Revolution actually brought new forces, a new class, to the front. Everybody knows that the best representatives of the proletariat are now gov-

* In March 1921 a strike movement flared up in Central Germany. The government enlisted the forces of the police to suppress it. The workers of Central Germany retaliated to this act of provocation on the part of the government by declaring a general strike which developed into an armed struggle. On March 24, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany appealed to the German workers to support the fighting workers by declaring a nation-wide strike. This appeal did not meet with a wide response and the isolated uprising was crushed. The "Lefts" in the Party elaborated a "theory of offensive" by the Communist Party with its "own forces," irrespective of whether the objective conditions for mass action existed or not.—*Ed.*

erning Russia; they built up an army, they led this army, they set up local government, etc., are running industry, and so on. There may be some bureaucratic distortions in this administration; but we do not conceal this evil. We expose it, combat it. Those who allow the struggle against the distortions of the new system to obscure its content and to cause them to forget that the working class has created and is guiding a state of the Soviet type are incapable of thinking, and are merely throwing words to the wind.

But the "forces of the working class" are not unlimited. If the flow of fresh forces from the working class is now feeble, sometimes very feeble, if, notwithstanding all our decrees, appeals and agitation, notwithstanding all the orders we issue calling for "the promotion of non-Party people," the flow of forces is still feeble, then making shift with mere declamations about having "lost faith in the forces of the working class" means descending to vapid phrasemongering.

We shall get no new forces without certain "respite." These forces can only grow slowly, and they can grow only on the basis of restored large-scale industry (i e., speaking more precisely and concretely, on the basis of electrification). There is *no other* source from which these forces can be obtained.

After an enormous exertion of effort unprecedented in world history, the working class in a small-peasant, ruined country, the working class, which has very largely become declassed, needs an interval of time in which to allow new forces to grow and be brought to the front, and in which the old and worn out forces can "recuperate." The creation of a military and state machine capable of successfully withstanding the trials of 1917-21 was a great effort, which engaged, absorbed and exhausted real "forces of the working class" (and not such as exist merely in the declamations of the tub-thumpers). One must understand this and reckon with the necessary, or rather, inevitable *slackening* of the rate of growth of *new* forces of the working class.

When the Mensheviks shout about the "Bonapartism" of the Bolsheviks (they rely on the troops and on the machinery of state against the will of "democracy," they say), they magnificently express the tactics of the bourgeoisie; and Milyukov is right when he supports them, supports the "Kronstadt" (the spring of 1921) slogans. The bourgeoisie is well aware that the *real* "forces of the working class" now consist of the mighty vanguard of that class (the Russian Communist Party, which—not at one stroke, but in the course of twenty-five years—won for itself by deeds the role, the name and the power, of the "vanguard" of the only revolutionary class) plus the elements which have been most weakened by being declassed, and which are most susceptible to Menshevik and anarchist vacillations.

Actually, the purpose of the slogan "more faith in the forces of the working class" is to increase the influence of the Mensheviks and anarchists.

This was vividly proved and demonstrated by Kronstadt in the spring of 1921. Every class-conscious worker should expose and send packing those who shout about our "lack of faith in the forces of the working class," because these tub-thumpers are in fact the accomplices of the bourgeoisie and the landlords who want to weaken the proletariat for their own benefit by helping to spread the influence of the Mensheviks and the anarchists.

If we dispassionately examine what the concept "forces of the working class" really means, we shall find that this is the "root of the trouble."

Gentlemen, what are you doing really to promote non-Party people to what is the main "front" today, the economic front, for the work of economic construction? This is the question that class-conscious workers should put to the tub-thumpers. This is how the tub-thumpers can and always should be exposed. This is how it can always be proved that, actually, they are not assisting but hindering economic construction; that they are not assisting but hindering the proletarian revolution; that they are pursuing not proletarian, but petty-bourgeois aims, and that they are serving an alien class.

Our slogans are: "Down with the tub-thumpers!" "Down with the unwitting accomplices of the Whiteguards who are repeating the mistakes of the hapless Kronstadt mutineers of the spring of 1921!" "Get down to businesslike practical work that will help to explain the specific features of the present situation and its tasks!" We need not phrases but deeds!

A sober estimation of these specific features and of the real, not imaginary, class forces tells us:

The period of proletarian achievements in the military, administrative and political fields unprecedented in world history has given way to a period in which the growth of new forces will be much slower; and this period did not set in by accident, it was inevitable; it was due to the operation *not of persons or parties, but of objective causes. In the economic* field, development is inevitably more difficult, slower, and more gradual. This arises from the very nature of the activities in this field compared with military, administrative and political activities. It follows from its specific difficulties, from its being more deep-rooted, if one may so express it.

That is why we shall strive to formulate our tasks in this new, higher stage of the struggle with very great, with treble caution. We shall formulate them as moderately as possible. We shall make as many concessions as possible within the limits, of course, of what the proletariat *can* concede and yet remain the ruling class. We shall collect the moderate tax in kind as quickly as possible and allow the greatest possible scope for the development, recuperation and restoration of peasant farming. We shall lease the enterprises that are not absolutely essential for us to lessees, including private capitalists and foreign concessionaires. We need a *bloc*, or alliance, between the proletarian state and state capitalism against the petty-bourgeois element. We must achieve this alliance skil-

fully, following the rule: "Measure your cloth seven times before you cut." We shall leave ourselves a smaller field of work, only what is absolutely necessary. We shall concentrate the enfeebled forces of the working class on something *less*, but we shall dig ourselves in all the more and put ourselves to the test of practical experience not once or twice, but over and over again. Step by step, inch by inch—for on the difficult road we have to travel, in the stern conditions under which we are living, and amidst the dangers we have to face, the "troops" we have at our command *cannot* at present advance in any other way. Those who find this work "dull," "uninteresting" and "unintelligible"; those who turn up their noses, or become panic-stricken, or who become intoxicated with their own declamations about the absence of the "previous elation," the "previous enthusiasm," etc., had better be "relieved of their jobs" and given a back seat, so as to prevent them from causing harm, for they will not or cannot understand the specific features of the present stage of the struggle.

Amidst the colossal ruin of the country and the exhaustion of the forces of the proletariat we, by a series of almost superhuman efforts, are setting to work on the extremely difficult task of laying the foundation for real Socialist economy, for the regular exchange of commodities (or, more correctly, exchange of products) between industry and agriculture. The enemy is still far stronger than we are; anarchic, bag-trader, individual commodity exchange is undermining our efforts at every step. We clearly see the difficulties and will systematically and persistently overcome them. Give more scope for local enterprise and initiative; send more forces to the localities, pay more attention to their practical experience. The working class can heal its wounds; its proletarian "class forces" can recuperate. The confidence of the peasantry in proletarian leadership can be strengthened *only* to the extent that real success is achieved in restoring industry, in bringing about a regular exchange of products through the medium of the state that will benefit both the peasants and the workers. And to the extent that we achieve this we shall get an influx of new forces, not as quickly as every one of us would like, perhaps, but an influx, nevertheless.

Let us get down to slower, more cautious, more persevering and persistent work!

August 20, 1921

Pravda No 190,
August 28, 1921

PURGING THE PARTY

It is apparent that the purging of the Party has developed into a serious and vastly important affair.

In some places the purging is proceeding mainly with the aid of the experience and suggestions of non-Party workers. These suggestions are being heeded, and the representatives of the non-Party proletarian masses are being treated with due consideration. This is extremely valuable and important. If we really succeed in purging our Party from top to bottom in *this way*, "without respect for person," it will be an enormous achievement for the revolution.

The achievements of the revolution cannot now be the same as they were previously. Their character inevitably changes in conformity with the transition from the war front to the economic front, with the transition to the new economic policy, with the conditions that primarily demand increased productivity of labour, increased labour discipline. In such a period improvements at home are the major achievements of the revolution; a modest, slight, almost imperceptible improvement in labour, in the organization of labour, in the results of labour; an improvement in the fight against the influence of the petty-bourgeois and petty-bourgeois-anarchist element which tends to corrupt the proletariat and the Party. To achieve such an improvement the Party must be purged of those who have become divorced from the masses (and, needless to say, of those who discredit the Party in the eyes of the masses). Of course, we shall not submit to everything the masses say, for sometimes the masses also yield to sentiments that are not in the least advanced, particularly in times of exceptional weariness and exhaustion resulting from excessive hardship and suffering. But in appraising persons, in our criticism of those who have "attached" themselves to us for selfish motives, to those who have become puffed-up "commissars" and "bureaucrats," the suggestions of the non-Party proletarian masses, and in many cases of the non-Party peasant masses, are extremely valuable. The masses of the working people have a fine intuition which enables them to distinguish the honest and devoted Communists from those who arouse the disgust of people who obtain their bread by the sweat of their brow, who enjoy no privileges and who have no "pull with the chief."

It is a big thing to purge the Party with the aid of the suggestions of the non-Party working people. It will produce important results. It will

make the Party a much stronger vanguard of the class than it was before, it will make it a vanguard that is more strongly bound up with the class, more capable of leading it to victory amidst great difficulties and dangers

As one of the specific objects of the purging of the Party I would point to the combing out of ex Mensheviks In my opinion, of the Mensheviks who joined the Party after the beginning of 1918, not more than about a hundredth part should be allowed to remain, and even then, every one *of those who is allowed to remain must be tested over and over again* Why? Because, as a trend, the Mensheviks in the period 1918 21 have displayed the two qualities that characterize them first, the ability skilfully to adapt, to "attach" themselves to the prevailing trend among the workers, and second, the ability even more skilfully to serve the Whiteguards faithfully and well, to serve them in deeds, while dissociating themselves from them in words Both these qualities are the logical product of the whole history of Menshevism It is sufficient to recall Axelrod's proposal for a "Labour Congress,"* the attitude of the Mensheviks towards the Constitutional Democrats (and to the monarchy) in words and deeds, etc , etc The Mensheviks "attach" themselves to the Russian Communist Party not only and even not so much because they are Machiavellian (although ever since 1903 they have shown that they are past masters in the art of bourgeois diplomacy), but because they are so "adaptable " Every opportunist is distinguished for his adaptability (but not all adaptability is opportunism), and the Mensheviks, as opportunists, adapt themselves "on principle," so to speak, to the prevailing trend among the workers and assume a protective colouring, just as a hare's coat turns white in the winter We must know this specific characteristic of the Mensheviks and take it into account And taking it into account means purging the Party of approximately ninety nine out of every hundred of the Mensheviks who joined the Russian Communist Party after 1918, *i e* , when the victory of the Bolsheviks first became probable and then certain

The Party must be purged of rascals, bureaucrats, dishonest or wavering Communists, and of Mensheviks who have repainted their "facade" but who have remained Mensheviks at heart

September 20, 1921

Rosta Agitation Leaflet No 20,
September 21, 1921

---

* The reference here is to the proposal made in 1905 by P B Axelrod, one of the Menshevik leaders to convene a so called "labour congress" at which Social Democrats, Socialist Revolutionaries and anarchists should be represented and which was to form a "broad" petty bourgeois labour party This Menshevik proposal was duly exposed by Lenin as being a thoroughly opportunist and pernicious attempt to liquidate the Social Democratic Party —*Ed*

ward country) has already been done towards the Socialist metamorphosis of society.

Let us, however, finish what we have to say about the bourgeois-democratic content of our revolution. Marxists must understand what this means. To explain, we shall quote a few graphic examples.

The bourgeois-democratic content of the revolution means that the social relations (systems and institutions) of the country are purged of mediaevalism, serfdom, feudalism.

What were the chief manifestations, survivals, remnants of serfdom in Russia up to 1917? The monarchy, the caste system, private landownership and land tenure, the inferior status of women, religion, and national oppression. Take any one of these "Augean stables," which, incidentally, were left largely uncleansed by all the more advanced states when they accomplished *their* bourgeois-democratic revolutions one hundred and twenty-five, two hundred and fifty and more years ago (1649 in England); take any of these Augean stables, and you will see that we have cleansed them thoroughly. In a matter of *ten weeks*, from October 25 (November 7), 1917 to the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (January 5, 1918), we did a thousand times more in this respect than was done by the bourgeois democrats and Liberals (the Cadets) and by the petty-bourgeois democrats (the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) *during the eight months* they were in power.

Those poltroons, gas bags, vainglorious Narcissusses and petty Hamlets brandished their wooden swords—but did not even abolish the monarchy! We cleaned out all that monarchist muck as nobody had ever done before. We left not a stone standing of that ancient edifice, the caste system (even the most advanced countries, such as England, France and Germany, have not completely eliminated the survivals of this system to this day!). We have torn out the deep-seated roots of the caste system, namely, the remnants of feudalism and serfdom in the system of landownership, to the last. "One may argue" (there are plenty of quill-drivers, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries abroad to indulge in such arguments) as to what "in the long run" will be the outcome of the agrarian reform effected by the Great October Revolution. We have no desire just now to waste time on such controversies, for we are deciding this, as well as all the controversies connected with it, not by arguing, but by fighting. But it cannot be denied that the petty-bourgeois democrats "compromised" with the landlords, the guardians of the traditions of serfdom, for eight months, while we completely swept the landlords and all their traditions from Russian soil in a few weeks.

Take religion, or the denial of rights to women, or the oppression and inequality of the non-Russian nationalities. These are all problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The nincompoop petty-bourgeois democrats talked about them for eight months. There is not a *single* country in the world, even the most advanced, where *these* questions have been

completely settled on *bourgeois-democratic lines*. In our country they have been settled completely by the legislation of the October Revolution. We have fought and are fighting religion in earnest. We have granted *all* the non-Russian nationalities *their own* republics or autonomous regions. In our country we no longer have the base, mean and infamous denial of rights to women or inequality of the sexes, that disgusting survival of feudalism and mediaevalism which is being renovated by the avaricious bourgeoisie and the dull-witted and frightened petty bourgeoisie in every other country in the world without exception.

All this constitutes the content of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. A hundred and fifty and two hundred and fifty years ago the leaders of that revolution (or of those revolutions, if we consider each national variety of the one general type) promised to rid mankind of mediaeval privileges, of sex inequality, of privileged state religions (or religious "*ideas*" or "religiousness" in general) and of national inequality. They promised, but did not keep their promises. They could not keep them, for they were hindered by their "respect"—for the "sacred rights of private property." Our proletarian revolution was not afflicted with this accursed "respect" for this thrice-accursed mediaevalism and for the "sacred right of private property."

But in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go further; and we did go further. We solved the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution *en passant*, in passing, as a "by-product" of our main and genuinely *proletarian*-revolutionary, Socialist activities. We always said that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. We said—and proved it by deeds—that bourgeois-democratic reforms are a by-product of the proletarian, *i.e.*, of the Socialist revolution. It should be stated that the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis, and other heroes of "Two-and-a-Half" Marxism were incapable of understanding *this* relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-Socialist revolutions. The first grows into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.

The Soviet system is itself one of the most vivid proofs, or manifestations, of how the one revolution grows into the other. The Soviet system provides the maximum of democracy for the workers and peasants; at the same time it marks a break with *bourgeois* democracy and the rise of a *new type* of democracy of world-historic importance, *viz*., proletarian democracy, or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Let the curs and swine of the moribund bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind it, heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our heads for our reverses and mistakes in the work of building up *our* Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOLD NOW AND AFTER THE COMPLETE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM

The best way to celebrate the anniversary of our great revolution would be to concentrate attention on the unsolved problems of the revolution. It is particularly appropriate and necessary to celebrate the revolution in this way at a time when we are faced with fundamental problems that the revolution has not yet solved; when we must assimilate something new (compared with what the revolution has done up to now) for the solution of these problems.

The new thing for our revolution at the present time is that we must resort to a "reformist," gradual, cautious and roundabout mode of operation in solving the fundamental problems of economic construction. This "novelty" gives rise to a number of questions, perplexities and doubts in both theory and practice.

A theoretical question: how can we explain the transition from a series of extremely revolutionary actions to extremely "reformist" actions in the same field at a time when the revolution as a whole is making victorious progress? Is this not a "surrender of positions," an "admission of defeat," or something of that sort? Of course, our enemies—from the semi-feudal type of reactionaries to the Mensheviks, or other knights of the Two-and-a-Half International—say that it is. They would not be enemies if they did not shout something of this sort on every pretext, and even without any pretext. The touching unanimity that prevails on this question among all parties, from the feudal reactionaries to the Mensheviks, is only further proof that opposed to the proletarian revolution is the "one reactionary mass" of all these parties (and it may be said in parenthesis: as Engels foresaw in his letters to Bebel of 1875 and 1884).

But there is some ... "perplexity" even among friends.

Restore large-scale industry, organize the direct interchange of its products with those of small-peasant farming, and thus assist the socialization of the latter. For the purpose of restoring large-scale industry, borrow from the peasants a certain quantity of foodstuffs and raw materials by means of the surplus-appropriation system—this was the plan (or method, system) that we followed for more than three years, up to the spring of 1921. This was the revolutionary approach to the problem, namely, to proceed at once to break up the old social and economic system completely and to substitute a new one for it.

Since the spring of 1921, instead of this approach, plan, method, or system of action, we have been adopting (we have not yet "adopted" but are still "adopting," and we have not yet fully realized this) a totally different method, a reformist type of method: not to *break up* the old social and economic system, trade, small production, small proprietorship, capitalism, but to *revive* trade, small proprietorship, capitalism, while cautiously and gradually getting the upper hand over it, or creating the possibility of subjecting it to state regulation *only to the degree* that it revives.

This is quite a different approach to the problem.

Compared with the previous revolutionary approach, this is a reformist approach (revolution is a change which breaks the old order to its very foundations and does not cautiously, slowly and gradually remodel it, taking care to break as little as possible).

The question arises: If after trying revolutionary methods you find that they have failed and adopt reformist methods, does this not prove that you are declaring the revolution itself to have been a mistake? Does it not prove that the revolution should not have been started at all; that you should have started with and confined yourselves to reforms?

This is the conclusion that is drawn by the Mensheviks and their ilk. But this conclusion is either sophistry and simply a fraud perpetrated by hardened politicians, or the childishness of political tyros. The greatest, perhaps the only danger that the genuine revolutionary is likely to fall into is that of exaggerating his revolutionariness; of forgetting the limits and conditions in which revolutionary methods are appropriate and can be successfully employed. Genuine revolutionaries have come a cropper most often when they began to write "revolution" with a capital R, to elevate "revolution" to something almost divine, to lose their heads, to lose the ability to reflect, weigh up and ascertain in the coolest and most dispassionate manner at what moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere of action it is necessary to act in a revolutionary manner and at what moment; under what circumstances and in which sphere it is necessary to adopt reformist action. Genuine revolutionaries will perish (not that they will be defeated from outside, but that their affairs will suffer internal collapse) only if they abandon their sober outlook and take it into their heads that "the great, victorious, world" revolution can and must solve all problems in a revolutionary manner under all circumstances and in all spheres of action. If they do this, their doom is certain.

Whoever "takes such a thing into his head" must perish, because he is inventing an absurdity in connection with a fundamental problem; and in the midst of fierce war (and revolution is the fiercest sort of war) the penalty for folly is defeat.

Why does it follow that "the great, victorious, world" revolution can and must employ only revolutionary methods? It does not follow at all. It is absolutely untrue, as is clear from purely theoretical propositions, if we continue to adhere to Marxism. That it is untrue is proved also by the ex-

ward country) has already been done towards the Socialist metamorphosis of society.

Let us, however, finish what we have to say about the bourgeois-democratic content of our revolution Marxists must understand what this means To explain, we shall quote a few graphic examples

The bourgeois democratic content of the revolution means that the social relations (systems and institutions) of the country are purged of mediaevalism, serfdom, feudalism

What were the chief manifestations, survivals, remnants of serfdom in Russia up to 1917? The monarchy, the caste system, private landownership and land tenure, the inferior status of women, religion, and nation al oppression Take any one of these "Augean stables," which, incidentally, were left largely uncleansed by all the more advanced states when they accomplished *their* bourgeois democratic revolutions one hundred and twenty five, two hundred and fifty and more years ago (1649 in England), take any of these Augean stables, and you will see that we have cleansed them thoroughly In a matter of *ten weeks*, from October 25 (November 7), 1917 to the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (January 5, 1918), we did a thousand times more in this respect than was done by the bourgeois democrats and Liberals (the Cadets) and by the petty-bourgeois democrats (the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) *during the eight months* they were in power

Those poltroons, gas bags, vainglorious Narcissusses and petty Hamlets brandished their wooden swords—but did not even abolish the monarchy! We cleaned out all that monarchist muck as nobody had ever done before We left not a stone standing of that ancient edifice, the caste system (even the most advanced countries, such as England, France and Germany, have not completely eliminated the survivals of this system to this day!) We have torn out the deep seated roots of the caste system, namely, the remnants of feudalism and serfdom in the system of landownership, to the last "*One may argue*" (*there are plenty of quill-drivers, Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries abroad to indulge in such arguments*) as to what "in the long run" will be the outcome of the agrarian reform effected by the Great October Revolution We have no desire just now to waste time on such controversies, for we are deciding this, as well as all the controversies connected with it, not by arguing, but by fighting But it cannot be denied that the petty-bourgeois democrats "compromised" with the landlords, the guardians of the traditions of serfdom, for eight months, while we completely swept the landlords and all their traditions from Russian soil in a few weeks

Take religion, or the denial of rights to women, or the oppression and inequality of the non Russian nationalities These are all problems of the bourgeois democratic revolution The nincompoop petty bourgeois democrats talked about them for eight months There is not a *single* country in the world, even the most advanced, where *these* questions have been

completely settled on *bourgeois-democratic lines*. In our country they have been settled completely by the legislation of the October Revolution. We have fought and are fighting religion in earnest. We have granted *all* the non-Russian nationalities *their own* republics or autonomous regions. In our country we no longer have the base, mean and infamous denial of rights to women or inequality of the sexes, that disgusting survival of feudalism and mediaevalism which is being renovated by the avaricious bourgeoisie and the dull-witted and frightened petty bourgeoisie in every other country in the world without exception.

All this constitutes the content of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. A hundred and fifty and two hundred and fifty years ago the leaders of that revolution (or of those revolutions, if we consider each national variety of the one general type) promised to rid mankind of mediaeval privileges, of sex inequality, of privileged state religions (or religious "*ideas*" or "religiousness" in general) and of national inequality. They promised, but did not keep their promises. They could not keep them, for they were hindered by their "respect"—for the "sacred rights of private property." Our proletarian revolution was not afflicted with this accursed "respect" for this thrice-accursed mediaevalism and for the "sacred right of private property."

But in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go further; and we did go further. We solved the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution *en passant*, in passing, as a "by-product" of our main and genuinely *proletarian*-revolutionary, Socialist activities. We always said that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. We said—and proved it by deeds—that bourgeois-democratic reforms are a by-product of the proletarian, *i.e.*, of the Socialist revolution. It should be stated that the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis, and other heroes of "Two-and-a-Half" Marxism were incapable of understanding *this* relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-Socialist revolutions. The first grows into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.

The Soviet system is itself one of the most vivid proofs, or manifestations, of how the one revolution grows into the other. The Soviet system provides the maximum of democracy for the workers and peasants; at the same time it marks a break with *bourgeois* democracy and the rise of a *new type* of democracy of world-historic importance, *viz.*, proletarian democracy, or the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Let the curs and swine of the moribund bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats who trail behind it, heap imprecations, abuse and derision upon our heads for our reverses and mistakes in the work of building up *our* Soviet system. We do not forget for a moment that we have committed

and are committing numerous mistakes and are suffering numerous reverses How can reverses and mistakes be avoided in a matter so new in the history of the world as the erection of a state edifice of an unprecedented ype We shall steadily strive to make up for our reverses and mistakes and to improve our practical application of Soviet principles, which is still very far from perfect But we have a right to be and are proud of the fact that it has been our good fortune to *begin* the erection of a Soviet state, and thereby to *usher in* a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a *ew* class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat—and towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imp rialist wars.

The question of imperialist wars, of the international policy of finance capital which dominates the whole world, a policy that *inevitably* engenders new imperialist wars, that inevitably causes an extreme intensification of national oppression, pillage, brigandry and the throttling of weak, backward and small nationalities by a handful of "advanced" powers—this question has been the keystone of the entire policy of all countries of the globe since 1914 It is a question of life and death for millions of people It is a question of whether 20,000,000 people (as compared with the 10,000,000 who were killed in the war of 1914 18 and in the supplementary "minor" wars that are still going on) are to be slaughtered in the next imperialist war, for which the bourgeoisie is preparing, which is growing out of capitalism before our very eyes It is a question of whether in that future war, which is inevitable (if capitalism continues to exist), 60,000,000 people are to be maimed (compared with the 30,000,000 maimed in the years 1914 18) In this connection, too, our October Revolution marked the beginning of a new era in world history The menials of the bourgeoisie and its hangers on—the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks and the petty bourgeois, allegedly "Socialist" democrats all over the world—*derided our slogan "convert the imperialist war into a civil war" But that* slogan proved to be the sole *truth*—and unpleasant, blunt, naked and brutal truth, but nevertheless the *truth*, as against the host of most refined lies uttered by jingoes and pacifists Those lies are being dispelled The Brest Litovsk Peace has been exposed The significance and consequences of the peace that is even worse than the Brest Litovsk Peace—the Peace of Versailles—are being more relentlessly exposed every day And the millions who are pondering over the causes of the recent war and of the approaching future war are more and more clearly realizing the grim and inexorable truth that it is impossible to escape imperialist war, and imperialist world (if the old orthography were still in use, I would have written the word *mir*, in both its meanings)* which inevitably engen-

*The Russian word *mir* means both *peace* and *world* In the old Russian orthography the words were written with different vowels to distinguish one from the other —*Ed*

ders imperialist war, it is impossible to escape that inferno, *except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution.*

Let the bourgeoisie and the pacifists, the generals and burghers, the capitalists and philistines, the pious Christians and the knights of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals vent their fury against that revolution. The torrents of abuse, calumnies and lies they utter cannot conceal the world-historic fact that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the slaves have replied to a war among the slave-owners by openly proclaiming the slogan: "Convert this war among the slave-owners for the division of their loot into a war of the slaves of all nations against the slave-owners of all nations."

For the first time in hundreds and thousands of years that slogan has grown from a vague and pious hope into a clear and definite political program, into an active struggle waged by millions of oppressed people led by the proletariat; it has grown into the first victory of the proletariat, the first victory in the struggle to abolish war and to unite the workers of all countries against the united bourgeoisie of various countries; against the bourgeoisie that makes peace and war at the expense of the slaves of capital, the wage workers, the peasants, the toilers.

This first victory *is not yet the final victory*. It was purchased by our October Revolution at the price of incredible difficulties and hardships, at the price of unprecedented suffering, accompanied by a series of severe reverses and mistakes on our part. How could a single backward people be expected to frustrate the imperialist wars of the most powerful and most developed countries of the world without sustaining reverses and without committing mistakes? We are not afraid to confess our mistakes and shall examine them dispassionately in order to learn how to correct them. But the fact remains that for the first time in hundreds and thousands of years the promise to "reply" to war among the slave-owners by a revolution of the slaves directed *agains* all and sundry slave-owners *has been completely fulfilled*—and is being fulfilled despite all difficulties.

We have made a start. When, at what date and time, and the proletarians of which nation will complete this process is not a matter of importance. The important thing is that the ice has been broken; the road is open and the path has been blazed.

Gentlemen, capitalists of all countries, keep up your hypocritical pretence of "defending the fatherland"—the Japanese against the American, the American against the Japanese, the French against the British, and so forth! Gentlemen, knights of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, and pacifist burghers and philistines of the entire world, go on "evading" the question of how to combat imperialist wars by issuing new "Basle Manifestos" (on the model of the Basle Manifesto of 1912). *The first Bolshevik revolution* has wrested *the first hundred million people* of this earth from the clutches of imperialist war and imperialist world. Subsequent revolutions will save the rest of mankind from such wars and from this world.

Our last, but most important, most difficult, and least accomplished task is economic construction, the task of laying the economic foundations for the new, Socialist, edifice on the site of the demolished feudal edifice and of the semi demolished capitalist edifice It is in this most important and most difficult task that we have sustained the greatest number of reverses and have made most mistakes How could any one expect that a task so new to the world could be begun without reverses and without mistakes? But we have begun it We are continuing it We are now correcting a number of our mistakes by our "new economic policy" We are learning how to continue erecting the Socialist edifice in a small peasant country without committing such mistakes

The difficulties are immense But we are accustomed to grappling with immense difficulties Not for nothing have our enemies called us "firm as a rock" and exponents of a "bonebreaking policy" But we have also learned to acquire, at least to some extent, another art that is essential in revolution, namely, flexibility, the ability to effect swift and sudden changes of tactics if changes in objective conditions demand it, and to choose another path for the achievement of our goal if the former path proves to be inexpedient or impossible at the given moment

Borne along on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm, rousing first the political enthusiasm and then the military enthusiasm of the people, we reckoned that by directly relying on this enthusiasm we would be able to accomplish economic tasks just as great as the political and military task we accomplished We reckoned—or perhaps it would be truer to say that we presumed without reckoning correctly—on being able to organize the state production and the state distribution of products on Communist lines in a small peasant country by order of the proletarian state Experience has proved that we were wrong It transpires that a number of transitional stages are necessary—state capitalism and Socialism—in order to *prepare* by many years of effort for the transition to Communism Not directly relying on enthusiasm but, aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal interest, personal incentive and business principles, we must first set to work in this small peasant country to build solid little gangways to Socialism by way of state capitalism Otherwise we shall never get to Communism, we shall never bring these scores of millions of people to Communism That is what experience, what the objective course of development of the revolution has taught us

And we, who during these three and four years have learnt to make abrupt changes of front (when abrupt changes of front are needed), have begun, zealously, attentively and sedulously (although still not zealously, attentively and sedulously enough) to learn to make a new change of front, namely, the "new economic policy" The proletarian state must become a cautious, assiduous and shrewd "business man," a punctilious *wholesale merchant*—otherwise it will never succeed in putting this small peasant country economically on its feet Under existing conditions, living as we are

side by side with the capitalist (for the time being capitalist) West, there is no other way of passing on to Communism. A wholesale merchant is an economic type as remote from Communism as heaven is from earth. But this is one of the contradictions which, in the actual conditions of life lead from a small-peasant economy *via* state capitalism to Socialism. Personal incentive will develop production: and our primary task is to increase production at all costs. Wholesale trade economically unites the millions of small peasants: it gives them a personal incentive, links them up and leads them to the next step, namely, to various forms of association and union in the process of production itself. We have already set to work to make the necessary changes in our economic policy; and here we already have certain successes to our credit; small and partial successes, it is true, but undoubted successes nevertheless. In this new field of "tuition" we are already finishing our preparatory class. By persistent and assiduous study, by subjecting every step we take to the test of practical experience, by not fearing to alter over and over again what we have already begun, to correct our mistakes and most carefully analyse their significance, we shall pass to the higher classes. We shall go through the whole "course," although the present state of world economics and world politics has made that course much longer and much more difficult than we would like. No matter at what cost, no matter how severe the hardships of the transition period may be—despite disaster, famine and ruin, we shall not flinch; we shall triumphantly carry our cause to its goal.

October 14, 1921

Pravda No. 234,
October 18, 1921

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOLD NOW AND AFTER THE COMPLETE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM

The best way to celebrate the anniversary of our great revolution would be to concentrate attention on the unsolved problems of the revolution. It is particularly appropriate and necessary to celebrate the revolution in this way at a time when we are faced with fundamental problems that the revolution has not yet solved; when we must assimilate something new (compared with what the revolution has done up to now) for the solution of these problems.

The new thing for our revolution at the present time is that we must resort to a "reformist," gradual, cautious and roundabout mode of operation in solving the fundamental problems of economic construction. This "novelty" gives rise to a number of questions, perplexities and doubts in both theory and practice.

A theoretical question: how can we explain the transition from a series of extremely revolutionary actions to extremely "reformist" actions in the same field at a time when the revolution as a whole is making victorious progress? Is this not a "surrender of positions," an "admission of defeat," or something of that sort? Of course, our enemies—from the semi-feudal type of reactionaries to the Mensheviks, or other knights of the Two-and-a-Half International—say that it is. They would not be enemies if they did not shout something of this sort on every pretext, and even without any pretext. The touching unanimity that prevails on this question among all parties, from the feudal reactionaries to the Mensheviks, is only further proof that opposed to the proletarian revolution is the "one reactionary mass" of all these parties (and it may be said in parenthesis: as Engels foresaw in his letters to Bebel of 1875 and 1884).

But there is some ... "perplexity" even among friends.

Restore large-scale industry, organize the direct interchange of its products with those of small-peasant farming, and thus assist the socialization of the latter. For the purpose of restoring large-scale industry, borrow from the peasants a certain quantity of foodstuffs and raw materials by means of the surplus-appropriation system—this was the plan (or method, system) that we followed for more than three years, up to the spring of 1921. This was the revolutionary approach to the problem, namely, to proceed at once to break up the old social and economic system completely and to substitute a new one for it.

Since the spring of 1921, instead of this approach, plan, method, c system of action, we have been adopting (we have not yet "adopted" but a still "adopting," and we have not yet fully realized this) a totally differer method, a reformist type of method: not to *break up* the old social an economic system, trade, small production, small proprietorship, capi talism, but to *revive* trade, small proprietorship, capitalism, while cautious ly and gradually getting the upper hand over it, or creating the possibi ity of subjecting it to state regulation *only to the degree* that it revives

This is quite a different approach to the problem.

Compared with the previous revolutionary approach, this is a reformis approach (revolution is a change which breaks the old order to its very four dations and does not cautiously, slowly and gradually remodel it, takin care to break as little as possible).

The question arises: If after trying revolutionary methods you find tha they have failed and adopt reformist methods, does this not prov that you are declaring the revolution itself to have been a mistake? Does i not prove that the revolution should not have been started at all; that yo should have started with and confined yourselves to reforms?

This is the conclusion that is drawn by the Mensheviks and their ilk But this conclusion is either sophistry and simply a fraud perpetrated b hardened politicians, or the childishness of political tyros. The greatest perhaps the only danger that the genuine revolutionary is likely to fall int is that of exaggerating his revolutionariness; of forgetting the limits an conditions in which revolutionary methods are appropriate and can b successfully employed. Genuine revolutionaries have come a cropper mos often when they began to write "revolution" with a capital R, to elevat "revolution" to something almost divine, to lose their heads, to lose th ability to reflect, weigh up and ascertain in the coolest and most dispassion ate manner at what moment, under what circumstances and in which spher of action it is necessary to act in a revolutionary manner and at wha moment; under what circumstances and in which sphere it is necessary t adopt reformist action. Genuine revolutionaries will perish (not that the will be defeated from outside, but that their affairs will suffer interna collapse) only if they abandon their sober outlook and take it into thei heads that "the great, victorious, world" revolution can and must solv all problems in a revolutionary manner under all circumstances and in al spheres of action. If they do this, their doom is certain.

Whoever "takes such a thing into his head" must perish, because he is inventing an absurdity in connection with a fundamental problem; and in the midst of fierce war (and revolution is the fiercest sort of war) the penalty for folly is defeat.

Why does it follow that "the great, victorious, world" revolution can and must employ only revolutionary methods? It does not follow at all. It is absolutely untrue, as is clear from purely theoretical propositions, if we continue to adhere to Marxism. That it is untrue is proved also by the ex-

perience of our revolution. Theoretically: foolish things are done in time of revolution just as at any other time, said Engels, and he was right. We must try to do as few foolish things as possible and to rectify those that are done as quickly as possible, calculating as dispassionately as possible, which problems can be solved at any given time by revolutionary methods and which cannot. Our own practical experience: the Brest Peace was an example of action that was not revolutionary at all, it was reformist, and even worse than reformist, because it was a retreat, whereas, as a general rule, reformist action advances, slowly, cautiously, gradually, but advances, nevertheless. The proof that our tactics in signing the Brest Peace were correct is now so complete, is so evident to all and generally admitted, that there is no need to say any more about it.

Our revolution completed only the bourgeois-democratic work; and we can be legitimately proud of this work. The proletarian or Socialist part of its work may be summed up in three points. 1) The revolutionary emergence from the imperialist world war; the exposure and *cessation* of the slaughter organized by the two world groups of capitalist marauders. Our part of this we accomplished in full; it could have been accomplished in all parts only by a revolution in a number of advanced countries. 2) The creation of the Soviet system, the form in which the dictatorship of the proletariat is effected. This epoch-making change has been made. The era of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism has drawn to a close. A new chapter in world history—the era of proletarian dictatorship—has been opened. The Soviet system and all forms of proletarian dictatorship will have the finishing touches put to them and be completed only by the efforts of a number of countries. We still have a great deal to do in this field. It would be unpardonable to lose sight of this. We shall have to put the finishing touches to the work, re-do it, start from the beginning all over again, more than once. Every step forward and upward that we take in developing our productive forces and our culture must be accompanied by the work of finishing and altering our Soviet system, and we are still low in the scale of economics and culture. Much will have to be altered, and to be "embarrassed" by this would be the height of folly (if not something worse than folly). 3) The construction of the economic foundations of the Socialist system In this field the main and fundamental thing has not yet been completed. But this is our surest foundation: surest from the point of view of principle, from the practical point of view, from the point of view of the R S.F.S.R. today, and from the international point of view.

Since the chief thing has not yet been completed in the main, we must concentrate all our attention upon this. The difficulty here lies in the form of the transition.

In my *Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*, written in April 1918, I wrote:

"It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of Socialism or a Communist in general. One must be able at each particular moment to find

the particular link in the chain which one must grasp with all one's might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, their difference from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as senseless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith."

At the present time, in the sphere of activity with which we are dealing, this link is the revival of internal *trade* under proper state regulation (direction). Trade—that is the "link" in the historical chain of events, in the transitional forms of our Socialist construction in 1921-22, which we, the proletarian state, we, the leading, Communist Party, *must "grasp with all our might."* If we "grasp" this link firmly enough *now* we shall certainly control the *whole* chain in the very near future. If we do not, we shall not control the whole chain, we shall not create the foundation for Socialist social and economic relations.

Communism and trade?! That may sound strange. The two seem to be disconnected, incongruous, remote from each other. But if we ponder over it from the point of view of *economics*, we shall find that the one is no more remote from the other than Communism is from small-peasant, patriarchal agriculture.

When we are victorious on a world scale I think we shall use gold for the purpose of building public lavatories in the streets of some of the largest cities of the world. This would be the most "just" and most educational way of utilizing gold for the benefit of those generations which have not forgotten how, for the sake of gold, ten million men were killed and thirty million maimed in the "great war for freedom," in the war of 1914-18, in the war that was waged to decide the great question of which peace was the worst, the Brest Peace or the Versailles Peace, and how, for the sake of this gold, preparations are certainly being made to kill twenty million men and to maim sixty million in a war, say, in 1925, or 1928, between, say, Japan and America, or between England and America, or something like that.

But however "just," useful, or humane it would be to utilize gold for this purpose, we nevertheless say: Let us work for another decade or so with the same intensity and with the same success as we have been working in 1917-21, only in a much wider field, in order to reach the stage when we can put gold to this use. Meanwhile, we must save the gold in the R.S.F.S.R., sell it at the highest price; buy goods with it at the lowest price. "When living among wolves, howl like wolves." As for exterminating all the wolves, as would be done in a rational human society, we shall act up to the wise Russian proverb: "Don't boast when going to war, boast when returning from war."

Trade is the only possible economic link between the scores of millions of small farmers and large-scale industry *if . . . if* there is not alongside these farmers an excellently equipped large-scale machine industry linked up by a network of electric cables; an industry so well equipped technical-

ly, with its organizational "superstructures" and accompanying accessories, as to be able to supply the small farmers with the best products in large quantities, more quickly and more cheaply than before On a world scale this "if" *has already been achieved* This condition already exists, but the country, formerly one of the most backward capitalist countries, which tried alone directly and at one stroke to create, to put into use, to organize practically the *new* links between industry and agriculture, failed to achieve this task by "direct assault," and must now try to achieve it by a number of slow, gradual, and cautious "siege" operations

The proletarian state can control trade, direct it into definite channels, keep it within certain limits I shall quote a small, a very small example in the Donetz Basin a slight, still very slight, but undoubted economic revival has commenced, partly due to an increase in the productivity of labour at the large state mines, and partly due to the fact that the small mines have been leased to peasants As a result the proletarian state is receiving a small quantity (a miserably small quantity compared with what is obtained in the advanced countries, but an appreciable quantity considering our poverty stricken condition) of extra coal at a cost of production of, say, 100 and it is selling this coal to various government departments at a price, of, say, 120, and to private people at a price of, say, 140 (I must say in parenthesis that my figures are quite arbitrary, first because I do not know the exact figures, and, secondly, I would not make them public even if I did) This looks as if we are *beginning*, if only in very modest dimensions, to control *trade* between industry and agriculture, to control wholesale trade, to cope with the task of taking in hand the available, small, backward industry, or large scale but enfeebled and ruined industry, of reviving trade on the *present* economic basis, of making the ordinary, average peasant (and this is the typical peasant, representative of the masses and the vehicle of anarchy) feel the benefit of the economic revival, of taking advantage of it for the purpose of more systematically and persistently, more widely and successfully, restoring large scale industry

We shall not drop into "sentimental Socialism," or assume the old Russian, semi aristocratic, semi muzhik and patriarchal air of supreme contempt for trade It is permissible to use, and, since it is necessary, we *must* learn to use all transitional economic forms for the purpose of strengthening the link between the peasantry and the proletariat, for the purpose of immediately reviving the national economy of our ruined and tormented country, of reviving industry, and facilitating future, more extensive and more deep going measures like electrification

Only Marxism has precisely and correctly defined the relation of reforms to revolution However, Marx was able to see this relation only from one aspect, namely, under the conditions preceding the first to any extent permanent and lasting victory of the proletariat, if only in a single country Under those conditions, the basis of the proper relation was reforms are a by product of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat

ıe capitalist world this relation is the foundation of the revolutionary
cs of the proletariat—the ABC, which is distorted and obscured by
venal leaders of the Second International and the half-pedantic and
mincing knights of the Two-and-a-Half International. After the vic-
of the proletariat, if only in a single country, something new enters
the relation between reforms and revolution. In principle, it is the
: as before, but a change in form takes place, which Marx himself could
foresee, but which can be appreciated only on the basis of the philoso-
and politics of Marxism. Why were we able to carry out the Brest retreat
essfully? Because we had advanced so far that we had room in which to
at. At breakneck speed, *in a few weeks*, from October 25, 1917, to the
t Peace, we built up the Soviet state, extricated ourselves from the
rialist war in a revolutionary manner and completed the bourgeois-
ocratic revolution so that *even* the great retreat (the Brest Peace)
us sufficient room in which to take advantage of the "respite" and
ıarch forward victoriously, against Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich,
ıdski and Wrangel.

efore the victory of the proletariat, reforms are a by-product of the
utionary class struggle. After the victory (while still remaining a
product" on an international scale) they are, in addition, for the coun-
ı which victory has been achieved, a necessary and legitimate respite in
: cases when, after the utmost exertion of effort, it becomes obvious
sufficient strength is lacking for the revolutionary accomplishment of
or that transition. Victory creates such a "reserve of strength" that it
ssible to hold out even in a forced retreat, hold out both materially
norally. Holding out materially means preserving a sufficient superi-
of forces to prevent the enemy from inflicting utter defeat. Holding
ıorally means not allowing oneself to become demoralized and disor-
ed, keeping a sober view of the situation, preserving vigour and
ıess of spirit, even making a long retreat, but within limits, stop-
the retreat in time, and again returning to the offensive.

e retreated to state capitalism, but we retreated within bounds. We are
retreating to the state regulation of trade; but we shall retreat within
ds. Signs are already visible that the retreat is coming to an end; the
ect of stopping this retreat in the not distant future is dawning. The
conscious, the more unanimous, the more free from prejudice we are in
ing out this necessary retreat, the sooner shall we be able to stop it,
he more lasting, speedy and extensive will our subsequent victorious
nce be.

nber 5, 1921

a No. 251,
nber 6-7, 1921

THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE TRADE UNIONS UNDER THE NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

DECISION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS), ADOPTED JANUARY 12, 1922

1 *The New Economic Policy and the Trade Unions*

The new economic policy introduces a number of important changes in the status of the proletariat, and consequently, in that of the trade unions The great bulk of the means of production in industry and the transport system remains in the hands of the proletarian state This, together with the nationalization of the land, shows that the new economic policy does not change the nature of the workers' state, although it does materially alter the methods and forms of Socialist construction, for it permits of economic rivalry between Socialism, which is now in the process of construction, and capitalism, which is trying to revive in the process of supplying the needs of the vast masses of the peasantry through the medium of the market

The change in the form of Socialist construction is due to the fact that in pursuing its policy of transition from capitalism to Socialism the Communist Party and the Soviet government are now adopting special methods and in many respects are operating differently from the way they operated before they are capturing a number of positions by a "new flanking movement," so to speak, are retreating in order to make better preparations for a new offensive against capitalism In particular, state regulated free trade and capitalism are now being permitted and are developing, on the other hand, the socialized state enterprises have been put on what is called a business basis, *i e* , they have been reorganized on commercial lines, which, in view of the general cultural backwardness and exhaustion of the country, will, to a greater or lesser degree, inevitably give the masses the impression that there is an antagonism of interest between the management of the different enterprises and the workers employed in them

2. *State Capitalism in the Proletarian State and the Trade Unions*

Without changing its essence, the proletarian state may permit free trade and the development of capitalism only within certain bounds, and only on the condition that the state regulates (supervises, controls, determines the forms and methods of, etc.) private trade and private capitalism. The successes of state regulation will depend not only on the state-power, but also, and to a larger extent, on the degree of maturity of the proletariat and of the masses of the working people generally, on their standard of culture, etc. But even if this regulation is completely successful, the antagonism of class interests between labour and capital will certainly remain. Consequently, one of the main tasks that will henceforth confront the trade unions is to protect in every way the class interest of the proletariat in its struggle against capital. This task should be openly put in the forefront, and the machinery of the trade unions must be reorganized, changed or supplemented accordingly (disputes committees, strike funds, mutual aid funds, etc., should be formed, or rather, built up).

3. *The State Enterprises That Have Been Put on the So-Called Business Basis and the Trade Unions*

The placing of state enterprises on the so-called business basis is an inevitable and inseparable concomitant of the new economic policy; in the near future this will become the predominant, if not the sole, form of state enterprise. Actually, this means that with free trade now permitted and developing, the state enterprises will to a large extent be put on a commercial basis. In view of the urgent necessity of increasing the productivity of labour, of making every enterprise pay its way and make a profit, and in view of the inevitable rise of departmental jealousy and excessive departmental zeal, this circumstance will inevitably create a certain antagonism of interests in matters concerning conditions of labour between the workers and the directors and managers of the state enterprises, or the government departments in charge of them. Therefore, as regards the socialized enterprises, it is undoubtedly the duty of the trade unions to protect the interests of the working people, to facilitate as far as possible the raising of their standard of living, and constantly to correct the blunders and excesses of the business organizations resulting from the bureaucratic distortions of the state apparatus.

4. The Essential Difference Between the Proletarian Class Struggle in a State Which Recognizes the Private Ownership of the Land, Factories, etc and Where Political Power Is in the Hands of the Capitalist Class, and the Economic Struggle of the Proletariat in a State Which Does not Recognize the Private Ownership of the Land and the Majority of the Large Enterprises and Where Political Power Is in the Hands of the Proletariat

As long as classes exist, the class struggle is inevitable In the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism the existence of classes is inevitable, and the Program of the Russian Communist Party definitely states that we are taking only the first steps in the transition from capitalism to Socialism Hence, the Communist Party, the Soviet government, and the trade unions, must frankly admit the existence of an economic struggle, and admit that it is inevitable until the electrification of industry and agriculture is completed—at least in the main—and until all the roots of small production and the rule of the market are cut thereby

On the other hand, it is obvious that under capitalism the ultimate object of the strike struggle is to break up the state machine and to overthrow the given class state power Under the transitional type of proletarian state, as ours is, however, the ultimate object of every action taken by the working class can be only to fortify the proletarian state and the proletarian class state power by combating the bureaucratic distortions, mistakes and flaws in this state, and by curbing the class appetites of the capitalists who try to evade its control, etc Hence, the Communist Party, the Soviet government and the trade unions, must never forget, and must never conceal from the workers and the mass of the working people, that the strike struggle in a state where the proletariat holds political power can be explained and justified only by the bureaucratic distortions of the proletarian state and the survival of all sorts of remnants of the old capitalist system in the government offices on the one hand, and by the political immaturity and cultural backwardness of the masses of the working people on the other.

Hence, when friction and disputes arise between individual groups of the working class and individual departments and organizations of the workers' state, the function of the trade unions is to facilitate the speediest and smoothest settlement of these disputes to the maximum advantage of the groups of workers they represent, taking care, however, not to prejudice the interests of other groups of workers and the development of the workers' state and its economy as a whole, for only this development can lay the foundations for the material and spiritual welfare of the working class The only correct, sound and expedient method of removing friction and of settling disputes between individual groups of the working class and the organs of the workers' state is for the trade unions to act as mediators, and through their competent bodies either

to enter into negotiations with the competent business organizations on the basis of precise demands and proposals formulated by both sides, or appeal to the higher state bodies.

In those cases where the unjust actions of the business organizations, the backwardness of certain groups of workers, the provocative activities of counter-revolutionary elements or, lastly, the neglect of the trade union organizations themselves, lead to open disputes in the form of strikes in state enterprises, and so forth, the function of the trade unions is to bring about the speediest settlement of the dispute by taking measures in conformity with the general character of trade union activities, to take steps to remove the real injustices and irregularities and to satisfy the lawful and practical demands of the masses, to exercise political influence on the masses, and so forth.

One of the most important and infallible tests of the correctness and success of the activities of the trade unions is the degree to which they succeed in averting mass disputes in state enterprises by pursuing a foresighted policy with a view to effectively protecting the interests of the masses of the workers in all respects and to removing in time all causes of dispute.

5. *Reversion to Voluntary Trade Union Membership*

The formal attitude of the trade unions to the automatic enrolment of all wage workers as members of trade unions has introduced a certain degree of bureaucratic distortion in the trade unions and has caused the latter to lose touch with the great bulk of their membership. Hence, it is necessary resolutely to practise voluntary enrolment both of individuals and of groups. Under no circumstances must members of trade unions be required to subscribe to any specific political views; in this respect, as well as in respect to religion, the trade unions must be non-partisan. All that must be required of trade union members in the proletarian state is that they should understand comradely discipline and the necessity of uniting the workers' forces for the purpose of protecting the interests of the working people and of assisting the working people's government, *i.e.*, the Soviet government. The proletarian state must encourage the workers to organize in trade unions both by juridical and material means; but the trade unions can have no rights without duties.

6. *The Trade Unions and the Management of Industry*

After the proletariat has captured political power, its principal and fundamental interests demand that the output of manufactured goods and the productive forces of society should be increased to enormous dimensions. This task, which is clearly formulated in the Program of the Russian Communist Party, is particularly urgent in this country today

owing to post war ruin, starvation and devastation Hence, unless the speediest and most enduring success is achieved in restoring large scale industry, no success can be achieved in the general cause of emancipating labour from the yoke of capital and of securing the victory of Socialism To achieve this success in Russia, in its present state, it is absolutely essential that all authority in the factories should be concentrated in the hands of the management The factory management, usually built up on the principle of one man management, must have authority independently to fix wages and distribute money wages, rations, special working clothes, and all other supplies, on the basis and within the limits of collective agreements concluded with the trade unions, it must have the utmost freedom to distribute these supplies at its own discretion, to enquire strictly into the actual successes achieved in increasing output, reducing losses and increasing profits, to choose very carefully outstanding and capable managers, etc

Under these circumstances, all direct interference by the trade unions in the management of factories must be regarded as positively harmful and impermissible

It would be absolutely wrong, however, to interpret this indisputable axiom to mean that the trade unions must play no part in the Socialist organization of industry and in the management of state industry Their participation in this is necessary in the following strictly defined forms

7 The Role and Functions of the Trade Unions in the Business and Administrative Organizations of the Proletarian State

The proletariat is the class foundation of the state which is in a process of transition from capitalism to Socialism The proletariat can successfully fulfil this function in a country where the small peasantry greatly predominates only if it very skilfully, cautiously and gradually establishes an alliance with the overwhelming majority of the peasantry The trade unions must be the closest and unfailing collaborators of the state power, all the political and economic activities of which are guided by the class conscious vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party Being a school of Communism in general, the trade unions must, in particular, be schools for training in the art of managing Socialist industry (and gradually also agricultural) the whole mass of workers, and eventually all working people

Proceeding from the foregoing principles, the trade unions' part in the activities of the business and administrative organizations of the proletarian state should, in the ensuing period, assume the following main forms

1 The trade unions should collaborate in constituting all the business and administrative organizations of the state that are connected with

economic affairs and nominate their candidates for them, indicating the latter's length of service, experience, and so forth. Right of decision lies solely with the business organizations, which also bear full responsibility for the activities of the competent state organization. The business organizations, however, must give careful consideration to the views expressed by the competent trade unions concerning all candidates.

2. One of the most important functions of the trade unions is to promote and train factory managers from the ranks of the workers and of the masses of the working people generally. At the present time we have scores of such factory managers who are quite satisfactory, and hundreds who are more or less satisfactory; very soon, however, we shall need hundreds of the former and thousands of the latter. The trade unions must much more carefully and regularly than hitherto keep a systematic register of all workers and peasants capable of holding posts of this kind, and thoroughly, practically and from every aspect verify the progress they make in learning the art of management.

3. The trade unions must take a far greater part in the activities of all the planning organizations of the proletarian state, in drawing up economic plans and programs of production and expenditure of stocks of material supplies for the workers, in choosing the factories that are to continue to receive state supplies, to be leased, or to be given out as concessions, etc. The trade unions should undertake no direct functions of controlling production in private and leased enterprises, but participate in the regulation of private capitalist production exclusively by taking part in the activities of the competent state organizations. In addition to participating in all cultural and educational activities and in production propaganda, the trade unions must also, on an increasing scale, enlist the working class and the masses of the working people generally, for all branches of the work of building up the state economy; they must make them familiar with all aspects of economic life and with all details of industrial operations—from the acquisition of raw materials to the realization of the product—give them a more and more concrete idea of the single state plan of Socialist economy and make them understand that it is the practical interest of the worker and peasant to fulfil this plan.

4. The drawing up of scales of wages and supplies, etc., is one of the essential functions of the trade unions in the building of Socialism and in their participation in the management of industry. In particular, the disciplinary courts should steadily improve labour discipline and the cultural forms of fighting for it and for increased output; but they must not interfere with the functions of the ordinary People's Courts or with the functions of factory management.

This list of the major functions of the trade unions in the work of building up Socialist economy should, of course, be drawn up in greater detail by the competent trade union bodies and the Soviet government. Taking

into account the experience of the enormous work accomplished by the trade unions in organizing the national economy and its management, and also the mistakes which have caused no little harm and resulting from direct, unqualified, incompetent and irresponsible interference in administrative matters, the most important thing for reviving the national economy and strengthening the Soviet regime, is deliberately and resolutely to start persevering and practical activities calculated to extend over a long period of years and designed to give the workers, and all working people generally, practical training in the art of managing the national economy of the whole country

8 *Contact with the Masses—the Fundamental Condition for All Trade Union Activity*

Contact with the masses, i e, with the overwhelming majority of the workers (and eventually of all the working people) is the most important and fundamental condition for the success of all trade union activity In all the trade union organizations, from bottom up, groups must be formed of responsible comrades—not all of them must be Communists—with many years of practical experience, who should live right among the workers, study their lives in every detail, be able unerringly, on any question, and at any time, to judge the mood, the real aspirations, needs and thoughts of the masses They must be able without a shadow of false idealization to define the degree of their class consciousness and the extent to which they are influenced by various prejudices and survivals of the past, and they must be able to win the boundless confidence of the masses by comradeship and concern for their needs One of the greatest and most serious dangers that confronts the numerically small Communist Party which, as the vanguard of the working class, is guiding a vast country in the process of transition to Socialism (for the time being without the support of the more advanced countries), is divorcement from the masses, the danger that the vanguard may run too far ahead and fail to "straighten out the line," fail to maintain permanent contact with the whole army of labour, i e, with the overwhelming majority of workers and peasants Just as the very best factory, with the very best engines and first class machines, will be forced to remain idle if the transmission belts from the motor to the machines are damaged, so our work of Socialist construction must meet with inevitable disaster if the trade unions—the transmission belts from the Communist Party, to the masses—are badly fitted or function badly It is not sufficient to explain, to reiterate and corroborate this truth, it must be backed up organizationally by the whole structure of the trade unions and by their everyday activities

9. *The Contradictions in the Status of the Trade Unions Under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*

From all the foregoing it is evident that there are a number of contradictions in the various functions of the trade unions. On the one hand, the trade unions' principal method of operation is that of persuasion and education; on the other hand, as participants in the exercise of state power, they cannot refuse to participate in the work of coercion. On the one hand, their main function is to protect the interests of the masses of the working people in the most direct and immediate sense of the term; on the other hand, as participants in the exercise of state power and builders of the national economy as a whole, they cannot refuse to exercise pressure. On the one hand, they must operate military fashion, for the dictatorship of the proletariat is the fiercest, most stubborn and most desperate class war; on the other hand, specifically military methods of operation can least of all be applied by trade unions. On the one hand, they must be able to adapt themselves to the masses, to stoop to their level; on the other hand, they must never pander to the prejudices and backwardness of the masses, but steadily raise them to a higher and higher level, etc., etc. These contradictions are not fortuitous; they will persist for several decades; for as long as survivals of capitalism and small production remain, contradictions between these survivals and the young shoots of Socialism are inevitable in all parts of the social system.

From this two practical conclusions must be drawn. First, that to conduct trade union activities successfully, it is not enough to understand their functions, it is not enough to organize them properly. In addition, special tactfulness is required, ability to approach the masses in a special way in each separate concrete case for the purpose of raising these masses to a higher cultural, economic and political stage with the minimum of friction.

Second, the aforementioned contradictions will inevitably give rise to disputes, disagreements, friction, etc. A higher body is required with sufficient authority to settle these at once. This higher body is the Communist Party and the international federation of the Communist Parties of all countries—the Communist International.

10. *The Trade Unions and the Specialists*

The main principles of this question are formulated in the Program of the Russian Communist Party; but these will remain a dead letter if constant attention is not paid to the facts which indicate the degree to which they are put into practice. Recent facts of this kind are: first, cases of the murder of engineers by workers in socialized mines not only in the Urals, but also in the Donetz Basin; second, the suicide of V.V. Ol-

POLITICAL REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS) DELIVERED MARCH 27, 1922 AT THE ELEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

Comrades, permit me to start the political report of the Central Committee not from the beginning, but from the end of the year. The most discussed political question today is Genoa.* But as a great deal has already been said about this in our press, and as I have already said what is most material to the subject in my speech on March 6, which has been published,** I would ask you to permit me to refrain from going into this question in detail unless you particularly wish me to do so.

You are all familiar with the general question of Genoa, because much space has been devoted to it in the newspapers—in my opinion too much space is devoted to it at the expense of the real, practical and urgent requirements of our work of construction in general, and of our economic construction in particular In Europe, in all bourgeois countries, of course, they like to occupy people's minds, or stuff their heads, with all sorts

* The reference here is to the international conference summoned by the Supreme Council of the League of Nations at Genoa, Italy, which met April 10 May 19, 1922 The representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, Japan, Soviet Russia and twenty two other nations participated in the conference The official purpose of the conference was to study ways and means for the post war "economic reconstruction of Central and Eastern Europe " Aggressive imperialist circles, banking on the economic difficulties of the Soviet Republic, strove to utilize the conference to force the latter to its knees They insisted that Soviet Russia recognize the war and pre war debts incurred by the tsarist government, restore to foreign capitalists the property that had been nationalized after the revolution, and so on and so forth All these claims were rejected by the Soviet representatives The Conference ended in a dead lock —*Ed*

** Lenin's reference here is to his speech on "The International and Internal Situation of the Soviet Republic" which he delivered at a meeting of the Communist group at the All Russian Congress of the Metal Workers' Union (*cf* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Eng ed , Vol IX, pp 305 19) —*Ed*

of trash about Genoa. On this occasion (although not only on this occasion) we are copying them; copying them far too much.

I must say that the Central Committee has taken very great pains to make up a delegation of our best diplomats (we now have a respectable number of Soviet diplomats, which was not the case in the early period of the Soviet Republic). The Central Committee has drawn up sufficiently detailed instructions for our diplomats who are going to Genoa; we spent a long time discussing them and considered and reconsidered them several times. It goes without saying that the question here is, I shall not say a military one, because that term is likely to be misunderstood, but at all events a question of rivalry. In the bourgeois camp there is a very strong trend, much stronger than any other trend, that wants to wreck the Genoa Conference. There are other trends which are strongly in favour of the Genoa Conference and want it to meet at all costs. The latter have now gained the upper hand. Lastly, in all bourgeois countries there are trends which might be called pacifist trends among which should be included the entire Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals. It is this section of the bourgeois front which is advocating a number of pacifist proposals and is trying to outline something in the nature of a pacifist policy. We Communists have definite views about this pacifism which it would be superfluous to expound here. Needless to say, we are going to Genoa not as Communists, but as merchants. We must trade, and they must trade. We want the trade to benefit ourselves; they want it to benefit themselves. The course of the issue will be determined, to some degree at least, by the skill of our diplomats.

In going to Genoa as merchants it is by no means a matter of indifference to us, of course, whether we shall deal with those representatives of the bourgeois camp who are inclining towards a military solution of the problem, or with the representatives of the bourgeois camp who are inclining towards pacifism, even of the worst kind which could not withstand the slightest Communist criticism. It would be a bad merchant, indeed, who was unable to appreciate this distinction, and, by shaping his tactics accordingly, attain practical objects.

We are going to Genoa with the practical object of expanding trade and of creating the most favourable conditions for its successful development on the widest scale. But we cannot guarantee the success of the Genoa Conference. It would be ridiculous and absurd to give any guarantees on that score. I must say, however, that, weighing up the present possibilities of Genoa in the most sober and cautious manner, I think that it will not be an exaggeration to say that we shall attain our object.

Through Genoa, if the other parties in the negotiations are sufficiently shrewd and are not too stubborn; round Genoa if they take it into their heads to be stubborn. But we shall attain our object!

The most urgent, pressing and practical interests that have been sharply revealed in all the capitalist countries during the past few years call

for the development, regulation and expansion of trade with Russia. Since such interests exist, we may argue, we may quarrel, we may split up and form various combinations—it is highly probable that we shall have to split up—nevertheless, after all is said and done, this fundamental economic necessity will hew a road for itself. I think we can rest assured of that. I cannot vouch for the date; I cannot vouch for success; but at this gathering we can say with a fair amount of certainty that the development of regular trade relations between the Soviet Republic and all the capitalist countries in the world is bound to continue. When I come to it in another part of my report I shall mention the hitches that may possibly occur; but I think that this is all that need be said on the question of Genoa.

Needless to say, the comrades who desire to study the question in greater detail and who are not satisfied with the list of delegates published in the newspapers may elect a commission, or a section, and peruse all the material of the Central Committee, and all the correspondence and instructions. Of course, the details we have outlined are provisional; for no one up to now knows exactly who will sit round the table at Genoa, and what terms, or preliminary terms or provisions will be announced. It would be highly inexpedient, and I think practically impossible, to discuss all this here. I repeat, the Congress, through the medium of a section, or a commission, has every opportunity to collect all the documents on this question—both the published documents and those in the possession of the Central Committee.

I shall not say any more, for I am sure that this is not our greatest difficulty. This is not the question on which the Party's attention should be focussed. The European bourgeois press is artificially and deliberately exaggerating the importance of this conference in order to deceive the masses of the toilers (as nine-tenths of the bourgeois press in all these free democratic countries and republics always does). We have succumbed to the influence of this press to some extent. Our press still yields to the old bourgeois habits; it refuses to adopt new, Socialist methods, and we have made more fuss about this subject than it deserves. In essence, for Communists, especially for those who have lived through such stern years as we have lived through since 1917 and witnessed the formidable political combinations that have been formed in this period, Genoa does not present any great difficulties. I cannot recall any disagreement or controversy on this question on our Central Committee, or even in the ranks of the Party. This is natural, for there is nothing controversial about this from the point of view of the Communists, even bearing in mind the various shades of opinion among them. I repeat: we are going to Genoa as merchants for the purpose of securing the most favourable terms for developing the trade which has started, which is being carried on, and which, even if someone succeeded in forcibly interrupting it for a time, will inevitably continue to develop.

Hence, confining myself to these brief remarks about Genoa, I shall now proceed to deal with the questions which, in my opinion, have been the major political questions during the past year and which will be such in the ensuing year. I think (at least, that is what I am accustomed to) that the political report of the Central Committee should not merely deal with the events of the year under review, but should also indicate the main, fundamental, political lessons of the events of that year, so as to learn something for the ensuing year and be in a position correctly to determine our policy for it.

The major question, of course, is the new economic policy. The predominant question during the year under review has been the new economic policy. If we have any important, serious and irrevocable gain to record for this year (and I am not quite sure that we have), it is that we have learnt something of the principles of this new economic policy. Indeed, during the past year we have learnt a great deal about the new economic policy. And the test of whether we have really learnt anything, and to what extent, will probably be made by subsequent events of a kind which we ourselves can do little to determine, as for example the impending financial crisis. I think that the most important thing that we must keep in mind in connection with the new economic policy, as a basis for all our arguments, as a means of testing our experience during the past year, and of learning practical lessons for the ensuing year, are the following three points.

First, the new economic policy is important for us primarily as a means of testing whether we are really establishing a bond with peasant economy. In the preceding period of development of our revolution, when all our attention and all our efforts were concentrated mainly on, or almost entirely absorbed by the task of resisting invasion we could not devote the necessary attention to this bond; we had other things to think about. When we were confronted by the absolutely urgent and overshadowing task of warding off the danger of being immediately strangled by the gigantic forces of world imperialism, we could afford to, and to a certain extent had to, ignore this bond.

The turn towards the new economic policy was decided on at the last Congress with exceptional unanimity, with even greater unanimity than other questions have been decided by our Party (which, it must be admitted, is generally distinguished for its unanimity). This unanimity showed that the need for a new approach to Socialist economics had fully matured. People who differed on many questions, and who appraised the situation from different angles, unanimously and very quickly and unhesitatingly agreed that we lacked a real approach to Socialist economy, to the task of building its foundation; that the only means of finding this approach was the new economic policy. Owing to the course taken by the development of military events, by the development of political events, by the development of capitalism in the old, cultured West, and owing to the social

and political conditions that arose in the colonies, we were the first to make a breach in the old bourgeois world in spite of the fact that our country was economically one of the most backward countries, if not the most backward country in the world. The vast majority of the peasants in our country are engaged in small, individual husbandry. The items of our Communist program of socialization that we were able to apply immediately did not to any degree affect the sphere of activity of the broad masses of the peasantry, upon whom we imposed very heavy obligations on the plea that war brooked no hesitation in this matter. Taken as a whole this plea was accepted by the peasantry, notwithstanding the inevitable mistakes that we committed. On the whole, the masses of the peasantry realized and understood that the enormous burdens that were imposed upon them were necessary in order to save the workers' and peasants' regime from the landlords, in order to save ourselves from the noose of capitalist invasion which threatened to rob us of all the gains of the revolution. But there was no bond between peasant economy and the economy that was being built up in the nationalized, socialized factories, and state farms.

We saw this clearly at the last Party Congress. We saw it so clearly that there was no hesitation whatever in the Party on the question as to whether the new economic policy was inevitable or not.

It is amusing to read what is said about our decision in the unusually extensive press of the various Russian parties abroad. There are only trifling differences in the opinions they express. Living in the past, they continue to reiterate that the Left Communists are opposed to the new economic policy. In 1921 they remembered what had occurred in 1918 and what our Left Communists themselves have forgotten; and they go on repeating this over and over again, assuring the world that these Bolsheviks are a very sly and false lot, and that they are concealing from Europe the fact that there are disagreements in their ranks. Reading this, one says to oneself: "Let them go on fooling themselves." If this is what they imagine is going on in our country, we can judge the degree of intelligence of these allegedly highly educated old fogies who have fled abroad. We know that there have been no disagreements in our ranks, because the practical necessity of a different approach to the task of building the foundation of Socialist economy was clear to all.

The bond between peasant economy and the new economy we tried to create was lacking. Does it exist now? Not yet. It is only just coming into being. The whole significance of the new economic policy—which our press still often searches for everywhere except where it can be found—the whole purpose of this policy is to find the bond with the new economy which we are creating with such enormous effort. That is what stands to our credit; without it we would not be Communist revolutionaries.

We began to build the new economy in an entirely new way, completely ignoring the old. Had we not done that, we would have been utterly defeated

in the very first months, in the very first years. But the fact that we began to build this new economy with such audacity does not mean that we must obstinately continue in the same way. Why does it follow that we should? It does not follow at all.

From the very beginning we said that we had undertaken an entirely new task, and that unless we received speedy assistance from our comrades, the workers in the capitalistically more developed countries, we should encounter incredible difficulties and undoubtedly commit a number of mistakes. The main thing is to be able dispassionately to examine where such mistakes have been made and to begin again from the beginning. If we begin from the beginning, not twice, but many times, it will show that we are not bound by prejudice, and that we are approaching the greatest task in the world with a sober outlook.

The main thing in the question of the new economic policy at the present moment is properly to assimilate the experience of the past year. This must be done, and we want to do it. And if we want to achieve this, come what may (and we do want to achieve it, and shall achieve it!), we must know that the problem of the new economic policy, the fundamental and decisive problem, beside which all else is subsidiary, is to establish a bond between the new economy that we have begun to build (very badly, very clumsily, but have begun to build nevertheless, on the basis of an entirely new, Socialist economy, of a new system of production and distribution), and peasant economy, by which millions and millions of peasants obtain their livelihood.

This bond has been lacking, and it is this bond that we must create before everything else. Everything else must be subordinated to this. We have still to ascertain to what extent the new economic policy has succeeded in creating this bond and not in destroying what we have begun so clumsily to build.

We are building our economy in conjunction with the peasantry. We shall have to alter it many times and build in such a way that it will serve as a bond between our Socialist work on large-scale industry and agriculture and the work on which every peasant is engaged as best he can, struggling out of poverty without philosophizing (for how can philosophizing help him to extricate himself from his position and save him from the very real danger of a painful death from starvation?).

We must reveal this bond so that we may see it clearly, so that all the people may see it, so that the whole mass of the peasantry may see that there is a connection between their present severe, incredibly ruined, incredibly impoverished and painful existence and the work which is being done for the sake of remote Socialist ideals. We must make the ordinary rank-and-file toiler realize that he has obtained some improvement, and that he has obtained it not in the way a few peasants obtained improvements under the rule of landlordism and capitalism, when every improvement (undoubtedly there were improvements and very important

ones) was accompanied by insult, derision and mockery for the muzhik, by violence against the masses, which not a single peasant has forgotten, and which will not be forgotten in Russia for decades Our aim is to restore the bond, to prove to the peasant by deeds that we are beginning with what is intelligible, familiar and immediately accessible to him, in spite of his poverty, and not with something remote and fantastic from the peasant s point of view We must prove that we can help him, and that in this period, when the small peasant is in a state of appalling ruin, impoverishment and starvation, the Communists are really helping him Either we prove that, or he will send us to the devil That is absolutely inevitable

This is the significance of the new economic policy, this is the basis of our entire policy, this is the major lesson taught by the whole of the past year's experience in applying the new economic policy, and, so to speak, our main political rule for the coming year The peasant is allowing us credit, and, of course, after what he has lived through, he cannot do otherwise Taken in the mass, the peasants go on living and say "Well, if you are not able to do it yet, we shall wait, perhaps you will learn" But this credit cannot be inexhaustible

This we must understand, and having obtained credit we must hurry We must know that the time is approaching when this peasant country will no longer give us credit, when it will demand cash, to use a commercial term It will say "You have postponed payment for so many months, so many years But by this time, dear rulers, you must have learnt some sound and reliable method of helping us to extricate ourselves from poverty, want, starvation and ruin You can do things, you have proved it" This is the examination that we shall inevitably have to face, and in the last analysis, this examination will decide everything the fate of the NEP and the fate of Communist rule in Russia

Shall we accomplish our immediate task or not? Is this NEP fit for anything or not? If the retreat turns out to be the correct tactics, we must link up with the peasant masses while in retreat, and subsequently march forward with them a hundred times more slowly, but more firmly and unswervingly, in a way that will always make it apparent to them that we are really marching forward Then our cause will be absolutely invincible, and no power on earth can vanquish us We did not accomplish this in the first year We must say this quite frankly And I am profoundly convinced (and our new economic policy enables us to draw this conclusion quite definitely and firmly) that if we appreciate the enormous danger that is concealed in the NEP and concentrate all our forces on its weak points, we shall solve this problem

Link up with the peasant masses, with the rank and file toiling peasants, and begin to move forward immeasurably, infinitely more slowly than we expected, but in such a way that the entire mass will actually move forward with us If we do that we shall in time get such

an acceleration of progress as we cannot dream of now. This, in my opinion, is the first fundamental political lesson of the new economic policy.

The second, more specific lesson is the test of competition between state and capitalist enterprises. We are now forming mixed companies (I shall say something about these later on), which, like our state trade and our new economic policy as a whole, means that we Communists are resorting to commercial, capitalist methods. These mixed companies are also important because through them practical competition is created between capitalist methods and our methods. Compare them in a practical way. Up to now we have been writing a program and making promises. At one time this was absolutely necessary. It is impossible to start a world revolution without a program and without promises. If the Whiteguards, including the Mensheviks, jeer at us for this, it only shows that the Mensheviks and the Socialists of the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals totally fail to understand the process of development of revolution. We could proceed in no other way.

Now, however, the position is that we must put our work to the test; we must put it to a serious test, and not the sort of test that is made by control institutions set up by the Communists themselves, even though these control institutions are magnificent, even though they are almost the ideal control institutions in the Soviet system and the Party. This is not the kind of test we need. We need the test of the economics of the masses.

The capitalist was able to supply things. He did it inefficiently, charged exorbitant prices, insulted and robbed us. The ordinary workers and peasants who do not argue about Communism because they do not know what it is, are well aware of this.

"The capitalist was able to supply things—are you? You are unable to do so." This is what we heard last spring, not always clearly, but it was the undertone of the whole crisis last spring. They said: "You are splendid people; but you cannot perform the economic functions you have undertaken." This is the simple and withering criticism which the peasantry—and through the peasantry a number of sections of workers—levelled at the Communist Party last year. That is why this point in the question of the NEP, this old point, acquires such significance.

We need a real test. The capitalists are operating alongside of you. They are operating like robbers; they make profit; but they are skilful. But you—you are trying to do it in a new way: you make no profit. Your Communist principles, your ideals are splendid; they are written out so beautifully, that you deserve to be living saints in heaven—but can you do business? We need a test, a real test, not the kind the Central Control Commission makes when it censures somebody and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee imposes some penalty. No, we want a real test, the test of our national economy.

We Communists have received numerous deferments, and more credit has been allowed us than any other government has ever received Of course, we Communists helped to get rid of the capitalists and landlords The peasants appreciated this and gave us an extension of time, longer credit, but only for a certain period . . . After that comes the test can you do business as well as the others? The old capitalist can, you cannot.

This is the first lesson, the first main part of the political report of the Central Committee We cannot do business This has been proved in the past year I would like very much to quote the example of several Gostrests* (if I may express myself in the beautiful Russian language that Turgenev praised so highly) to show how we do business . .

Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, and largely owing to ill-health, I have been unable to elaborate this part of my report and so I must confine myself to expressing my conviction, based on my observations of what is going on During the past year we showed quite clearly that we cannot do business This is the fundamental lesson Either we prove the opposite in the coming year, or the Soviet regime will go under And the greatest danger is that not everybody realizes this If all Communists, the responsible officials, clearly realized that we lack business acumen, that we must learn from the very beginning and that if we do that, the game is ours—that, in my opinion, would be the fundamental conclusion to be drawn But many of us do not realize this and believe that if any people do think that way, it can only be the ignorant, who have not studied Communism, but, perhaps, will do so, some day, and understand No, excuse me, the point is not that the peasant or the non Party worker has not studied Communism, but that the time for drafting a program and calling upon the people to carry out this great program has gone by That time has passed Today you must prove that you can give practical, economic assistance to the workers and to the muzhiks under the present difficult conditions, and thus prove to them that you can stand the test of competition

The mixed companies that we have begun to form, consisting of private capitalists, Russian and foreign, and Communists, provide one of the means by which we can learn to organize competition properly and show that we are no less able to establish a bond with peasant economy than the capitalists, that we can meet its requirements, that we can help it to make progress even at its present level, in spite of its backwardness, for we cannot change it in a brief space of time

This is the sort of competition that confronts us as an absolutely urgent task This is the pivot of the new economic policy, and in my opinion it is the quintessence of the Party's policy We are faced with any number of purely political problems and difficulties You know what they are Genoa, the danger of intervention The difficulties are enormous, but

* Abbreviation of Gosudarstvenni trest (State Trust) —*Ed*

they are nothing compared with this one. We know how things are done in that field; we have learnt a great deal; we have gained experience in bourgeois diplomacy. It is the sort of thing the Mensheviks taught us for fifteen years, and we got something useful out of it. This is not new.

But here is something we must do now in economics; we must stand up to the competition of the ordinary shop assistant, of the ordinary capitalist, of the merchant, who will go to the peasant without arguing about Communism. Just imagine, he will not begin to argue about Communism, but will argue in this way: "Since it is necessary to supply things, to carry on regular trade, to build, I will build at a high price; the Communists will, perhaps, build at a higher price, perhaps ten times higher." This is the kind of agitation that now expresses the quintessence of the subject; herein lies the root of economics.

I repeat, we received deferment of payment and credit from the people thanks to our correct policy, and this, to express it in terms of NEP, is a promissory note. But this promissory note is undated, and the wording of the document does not indicate when it will be presented for redemption. Herein lies the danger; this is the specific feature that distinguishes these political promissory notes from ordinary, commercial promissory notes. We must concentrate all our attention on this, and not rest content with having responsible and good Communists in all the State Trusts and mixed companies. That is of no use, because these Communists do not know how to trade and are inferior to the ordinary capitalist salesmen who have received their training in big factories and big firms. But we refuse to admit this; in this field Communist conceit—*Komchvanstvo*,* to use the same great and beautiful Russian language again—still persists. The whole point is that the responsible Communists, even the best of them, who are unquestionably honest and loyal, who in the old days suffered penal servitude and did not fear death, cannot trade, because they are not businessmen, they have not learnt to trade, do not want to learn and do not understand that they must start from the ABC. What! Communists, revolutionaries who have made the greatest revolution in the world, on whom the eyes of, if not forty pyramids, then at all events forty European countries, are turned in the hope of emancipation from capitalism—must they learn from ordinary salesmen? But these ordinary salesmen have had ten years' warehouse experience and know the business, whereas the responsible Communists and devoted revolutionaries do not know the business, and do not even realize that they do not know it.

And so, comrades, if we do away with at least this elementary ignorance we shall achieve a great victory. We must leave this Congress with the conviction that we are ignorant of this business and with the resolve to start learning it from the ABC. After all, we have not ceased

* Literally, "Comconceit."—*Ed.*

to be revolutionaries (although many say, not altogether without foundation, that we have become bureaucrats) and can understand this simple thing, that in a new and unusually difficult undertaking we must be ready to start from the beginning over and over again If after starting you find yourselves at a dead end, start again, and go on doing it ten times if necessary, until you attain your object Do not put on airs, do not be conceited because you are a Communist, for any non Party salesman, perhaps a Whiteguard—we can be quite sure he is a Whiteguard—can do business which economically must be done at all costs, but which you are unable to do If you responsible Communists, who have rank and hundreds of Communist and Soviet titles and 'Chevaliers," realize this, you will attain your object, because this thing can be learnt

We have some minute successes to record during the past year, but they are only minute ones The main thing that is lacking is widespread realization and conviction among all Communists that at the present time the responsible and most devoted Russian Communist is less able to perform these functions than any old salesman I repeat, we must start learning from the very beginning If we realize this, we shall pass our examination, and the examination to which the impending financial crisis—the examination to which the Russian and international market to which we are subordinated, with which we are connected, and from which we cannot isolate ourselves—will put us, will be a very severe one, for here we may be beaten economically and politically

This is how the question stands and it cannot be otherwise, for the competition will be very severe, and this competition is decisive We had many outlets and loopholes that enabled us to escape from our political and economic difficulties We can proudly say that up to now we have been able to utilize these outlets and loopholes in various combinations, corresponding to the varying circumstances But now we have no other way of escape Permit me to say this to you without exaggeration, because in this respect it is really "the last fight we must face," not against international capitalism—against that we shall yet have many 'last fights to face"—but against Russian capitalism, against the capitalism that is growing out of small peasant husbandry, the capitalism which is fostered by the latter Here a fight is impending in the near future, the date of which cannot be definitely fixed Here the 'last fight' is impending, here there are no political or any other flanking movements that we can undertake, because this is an examination in competition with private capital Either we pass this examination in competition with private capital, or we suffer utter defeat To help us pass this examination we have political power and a host of economic and other resources, we have all we need except business acumen We lack business acumen And if we learn the simple lesson that the experience of last year teaches us and take it as our guiding line for the whole of 1922, we shall also conquer this difficulty—in spite of the fact that it

is greater than the previous difficulty—for it rests upon ourselves. It is not like some external enemy. The difficulty is that we ourselves refuse to admit the unpleasant truth that is forced upon us; we refuse to undertake the unpleasant duty that the situation demands of us, namely, to start learning from the beginning. This, in my opinion, is the second lesson that we must learn from the new economic policy.

The third, supplementary, lesson is on the question of state capitalism. It is a pity that Bukharin is not present at the Congress. I should have liked to argue with him a little, but that had better be postponed to the next Congress. On the question of state capitalism, I think that our press, and our Party generally, is making the mistake of dropping into intellectualism, into Liberalism; it is philosophizing about how state capitalism is to be interpreted, and is rummaging among old books. But you will not find what we are discussing in those old books. Those books deal with the state capitalism that exists under capitalism. Not a single book has been written about the state capitalism that exists under Communism. It did not even occur to Marx to write a word on this subject; and he died without leaving a single precise statement or definite instruction on it. That is why we must extricate ourselves from the difficulty entirely by our own efforts. And if we peruse our press and see what it has written about state capitalism, as I did when preparing for this report, we shall be convinced that it is beside the mark, that it is looking in an entirely wrong direction.

The state capitalism that is discussed in all books on economics is the state capitalism which exists under the capitalist system, where the state takes direct control of certain capitalist enterprises. Our state is a proletarian state; its foundation is the proletariat; it gives the proletariat all political privileges; and through the medium of the proletariat it attracts to itself the lower ranks of the peasantry (you remember that we started doing this through the Committees of Poor Peasants). That is why very many people are misled by the term state capitalism. To avoid this we must remember the fundamental thing, *viz.*, that state capitalism in the form that we have it here is not dealt with in any theory, or in any books, for the simple reason that all the usual concepts connected with this term are associated with the bourgeois state in capitalist society. Our society is one which has left the rails of capitalism, but has not yet got onto new rails. The state in this society is not guided by the bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat. We refuse to understand that when we say "state" we mean ourselves, the proletariat, the vanguard of the working class. State capitalism is capitalism which we shall be able to restrict, the limits of which we shall be able to fix. This state capitalism is connected with the state, and the state is the workers; it is the advanced section of the workers; it is the vanguard. We are the state.

State capitalism is capitalism that we must confine to certain limits; but we have not yet been able to confine it to those limits. That is the

whole point. It is we who must determine what this state capitalism is to be. We have sufficient, quite sufficient political power; we also have sufficient economic resources at our command; but the vanguard of the working class which has been brought to the forefront lacks sufficient ability to lead, to determine the boundaries, to distinguish itself from the mass, to subordinate others and not be subordinated itself. All that is needed is business acumen, and this is what is lacking.

Never before in history has there been a situation in which the proletariat, the revolutionary vanguard, possessed sufficient political power and had state capitalism existing alongside of it. The whole question turns on our understanding that this is the capitalism that we can and must permit, that we can and must confine to certain limits; for this capitalism is essential for the broad masses of the peasantry and for private capital, which must trade in such a way as to satisfy the needs of the peasantry. We must provide facilities for the ordinary operation of capitalist production and for capitalist exchange, because this is essential for the people. Without it, existence is impossible. All the rest is not a vital matter to the other camp. They can resign themselves to all that. You Communists, you workers, you, the politically enlightened section of the proletariat which undertook to administer the state, arrange it so that the state, which you have taken into your hands, shall work the way you want it to. Well, we have lived through a year, the state is in our hands; but has it operated the new economic policy in the way we wanted in the past year? No. But we refuse to admit this. It did not operate in the way we wanted. How did it operate? The machine refused to obey the hand that guided it. It was like an automobile that was going not in the direction the driver desired, but in the direction someone else desired; as if it were being driven by some mysterious, lawless hand, God knows whose, perhaps of a profiteer, or of a private capitalist, or of both. Be that as it may, the car is not going quite in the direction the man at the wheel imagines, and often it goes in an altogether different direction. This is the main thing that must be remembered in regard to state capitalism. In this main field we must start learning from the very beginning, and only when we have thoroughly understood and appreciated this can we be sure that we shall learn this.

Now I come to the question of stopping the retreat which I dealt with in the speech I delivered at the Congress of the Metal Workers' Union. Up to now I have not heard in the Party press, in private letters from comrades, or on the Central Committee, any objection to what I then said. The Central Committee approved my plan, which was, that in the report of the Central Committee to the present Congress strong emphasis should be laid on the cessation of this retreat and that the Congress should give binding instructions in the name of the whole Party accordingly. For a year we have been retreating. In the name of the Party we must now call a halt. The purpose pursued by the retreat has

been achieved. This period is drawing, or has drawn, to a close. Now our purpose is different—to regroup our forces. We have reached a new line; on the whole, we have conducted the retreat in fairly good order. True, not a few voices were heard from various sides which tried to convert this retreat into a rout. Some—for example several representatives of the group which bore the name of "Workers' Opposition" (I don't think they had any right to that name)—argued that we were not retreating properly in some section or other. Owing to their excessive zeal they found themselves in the wrong box, and now they realize it. At that time they did not realize that their activities did not help us to correct our movements, but merely had the effect of spreading panic and hindering our effort to retreat in a disciplined manner.

A retreat is a difficult matter, especially for revolutionaries who are accustomed to advance; especially when they have been accustomed to advance with enormous success for several years; especially if they are surrounded by revolutionaries in other countries who are longing for the time when they can launch an offensive. Seeing that we were retreating, several of them, in a disgraceful and childish manner, burst into tears, as was the case at the last Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Moved by the best Communist sentiments and Communist aspirations, several of the comrades burst into tears because—oh horror!—the good Russian Communists were retreating. Perhaps it is now difficult for me to understand West European mentality, although I spent quite a number of years in those beautiful democratic countries as a political exile. Perhaps from their point of view this is such a difficult matter to understand that it is enough to make one weep. We, at any rate, have no time for sentiment. It was clear to us that precisely because we had advanced so successfully for many years and had achieved so many extraordinary victories (and all this in a country that was in an appalling state of ruin and lacked the material basis!) it was absolutely essential for us to retreat in order to consolidate our advance, since we had captured so much. We could not hold all the positions we had captured in the first onslaught. On the other hand, it was precisely because we had captured so much in the first onslaught, on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm displayed by the workers and peasants, that we had room enough to retreat a long distance and can retreat still further, without losing our main positions. Taken on the whole, the retreat was fairly orderly, although certain panic-stricken voices, among them that of the "Workers' Opposition" (this was the tremendous harm it did!), caused some of our units to be cut off, caused relaxation of discipline, and disturbed the proper order of retreat. The most dangerous thing during a retreat is panic. When a whole army (I speak in the figurative sense) is in retreat, its morale cannot be the same as when it is advancing. At every step you find that a mood of depression prevails to some extent. We even had poets who wrote that

people were cold and starving in Moscow. "Everything before was bright and beautiful, but now trade and profiteering abound." We had quite a number of poetic effusions of this sort.

Of course, all this is engendered by the retreat. This is where the serious danger lies; it is terribly difficult to retreat after a great victorious advance, the relations are entirely different. During a victorious advance, even if discipline is relaxed, everybody presses forward on his own accord During a retreat, however, discipline must be more conscious and a hundred times more necessary, because, when the entire army is in retreat it is not clear to it, it is not sure where it is going to stop. It sees only retreat; under such circumstances a few panic-stricken voices are enough to cause a stampede The danger here is enormous. When a real army is in retreat, machine guns are placed in the rear, and when an orderly retreat degenerates into a disorderly one, the command is given "Fire!" And quite right.

If, during an incredibly difficult retreat, when everything depends on preserving good order, anyone spreads panic—even from the best of motives—the slightest breach of discipline must be punished severely, sternly, ruthlessly, and this applies not only to certain of our internal Party affairs, but also, and to a greater extent, to such gentlemen as the Mensheviks, and to all the gentlemen of the Two-and-a-Half International.

The other day I read an article by Comrade Rákosi in No. 20 of *The Communist International* on a new book by Otto Bauer, who was our teacher at one time, but who, like Kautsky became a miserable philistine after the war. Bauer now writes "There, they are now retreating to capitalism! We have always said that the revolution is a bourgeois revolution."

And the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, all of whom preach this sort of thing, are astonished when we say that we shall shoot those who say such things. They are amazed, but surely it is clear. When an army is in retreat a hundred times more discipline is required than when the army is advancing, because during an advance everybody rushes forward If everybody started rushing back now, immediate disaster would be inevitable.

The most important thing at such a time is to retreat in good order, to fix the precise limits of the retreat, and not to give way to panic And when a Menshevik says: "You are now retreating, I have been in favour of retreat all the time, I agree with you, I am your man, let us retreat together," we say in reply. "For the public advocacy of Menshevism our revolutionary courts must pass sentence of death, otherwise they are not our courts, but God knows what "

They cannot understand this and exclaim: "What dictatorial manners these people have!" They still think we are persecuting the Mensheviks because they fought us at Geneva But had we listened to what they said we should have been unable to hold power for two months Indeed, the sermons which Otto Bauer, the leaders of the Second and Two-and-a-Half

Internationals, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries preach express their true natures: "The revolution has gone too far. What you are saying now we have been saying all the time, permit us to say it again." But we say in reply: "Permit us to put you against the wall for saying that. Be good enough to refrain from expressing your views. If you insist on expressing your political views publicly in the present circumstances, when our position is far more difficult than it was when the Whiteguards were directly attacking us, we shall treat you as the worst and most pernicious Whiteguard elements." We must never forget this.

When I say that we are stopping the retreat I do not mean that we have learnt to trade. On the contrary, I am of the opposite opinion; and if my speech were to create that impression it would show that I had been misunderstood and that I am unable to express my thoughts properly.

The point, however, is that we must put a stop to the nervousness and fuss that have arisen in connection with the introduction of the NEP; the desire to do everything in a new way and to adapt everything. We now have a number of mixed companies. True, we have only very few. We have formed nine companies in conjunction with foreign capitalists; and these have been sanctioned by the Commissariat for Foreign Trade. The Sokolnikov Commission has sanctioned six more and the Northern Lumber Trust has sanctioned two. Thus we have seventeen companies with an aggregate capital amounting to many millions, sanctioned by several government departments (of course, there is plenty of confusion with all these departments, and this may cause some hitch). At all events, we have formed companies jointly with Russian and foreign capitalists. There are only a few of them. But this small but practical start shows that the Communists have been judged by what they do. They have not been judged by such high institutions as the Central Control Commission and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. The Central Control Commission is a splendid institution, of course, and we shall now give it more power. For all that, dreadful as it may appear to us, the judgment these institutions pass on Communists is not recognized on the international market. But now that ordinary Russian and foreign capitalists are joining the Communists in forming companies, we say: "We can do something after all; bad as it is, meagre as it is, we have got something for a start." True, it is not very much. Just think of it: a year has passed since we declared that we would devote all our energy (and it is said that we have a great deal of energy) to this matter, and in the course of a year we have managed to form only seventeen companies!

This shows how devilishly clumsy and inept we are; how much Oblomovism still remains, for which we shall inevitably get a good thrashing. For all that, I repeat, a start, a reconnaissance has been made. The capitalists would not agree to have dealings with us if the elementary conditions for their operations were absent. Even if only a very small section of them has agreed to this, already—it is a partial victory.

Of course, they will cheat us in these companies, cheat us so that it will take years before matters are straightened out. But this is nothing. I do not say that this is a victory; it is a reconnaissance, which shows that we have an arena, we have a terrain, and can now stop the retreat.

The reconnaissance has revealed that we have concluded an insignificant number of agreements with capitalists; but we have concluded them for all that. We must learn from that and continue our operations. In this sense we must put a stop to nervousness, screaming and fuss. We receive notes and telephone messages, one after another asking: "Now that we have the NEP, may we be reorganized too?" Everybody is bustling, and we get utter confusion; nobody is doing any practical work; everybody is continuously arguing about how to adapt oneself to the NEP but no practical results are forthcoming.

The merchants are laughing at us Communists, and in all probability are saying: "Formerly they had Persuaders-in-Chief, now they have Talkers-in-Chief." There is not the slightest doubt that the capitalists gloated over the fact that we started late, that we were not sharp enough. In this sense, I say, these instructions must be endorsed in the name of the Congress.

The retreat is at an end. The principal methods of operation, of how we are to work with the capitalists, are indicated. We have examples, even if an insignificant number.

Stop philosophizing and arguing about the NEP. Let the poets write verses, that is what they are poets for. But you economists, stop arguing about the NEP and get more companies formed; count up how many Communists we have who can successfully compete with the capitalists.

The retreat has come to an end; it is now a matter of regrouping our forces. These are the instructions that the Congress must pass so as to put an end to fuss and bustle. Calm down, do not philosophize; if you do, it will be counted as a black mark against you. Show by your practical efforts that you can work as well as the capitalists. The capitalists are creating an economic bond with the peasants in order to amass wealth; you must create a bond with peasant economy in order to strengthen the economic power of our proletarian state. You have the advantage over the capitalists in that political power is in your hands; you have a number of economic weapons at your command; the only trouble is that you cannot make proper use of them. Look at things more soberly. Cast off the tinsel, the festive, Communist garments; sit down simply to learn a simple matter. If you do that we shall beat the private capitalist. We possess political power; we possess a host of economic weapons. If we beat capitalism and create a bond with peasant husbandry we shall become an absolutely invincible power. Then the building of Socialism will not be the task of that drop in the ocean called the Communist Party, but the task of the entire mass of the working people. Then the rank-and-file peasants will see that we are helping them and they will follow our lead. Consequent-

ly, even if the pace is a hundred times slower, it will be a million times more certain.

It is in this sense that we must say that we are stopping the retreat; and the proper thing to do is, in one way or another, to make this slogan a Congress decision.

In this connection, I should like to deal with the question of whether the Bolsheviks' new economic policy is evolution or tactics. This question has been raised by the *Smyena Vekh*-ites,* who, as you know, are a trend which has arisen in émigré Russia; it is a social-political trend led by some of the most prominent Constitutional-Democrats, several ex-Ministers in the ex-Kolchak government; people who have become convinced that the Soviet government is building up the Russian state and therefore should be supported. They argue as follows: "What sort of state is the Soviet government building? The Communists say they are building a Communist state and assure us that this is tactics; the Bolsheviks say that they are utilizing the services of the private capitalists in a difficult situation, but later they will get the upper hand. The Bolsheviks can say what they like; as a matter of fact it is not tactics but evolution, internal regeneration; they will arrive at the ordinary bourgeois state, and we must support them. History proceeds in devious ways."

Several of them pretend to be Communists; but many of them, including Ustryalov, are more straightforward. I think he was a Minister in Kolchak's government. He does not agree with his fellow *Smyena Vekh*-ites and says: "You can say what you like about Communism, but I maintain that it is not tactics, but evolution." I think that by being straightforward like this, Ustryalov is rendering us a great service. We, and I particularly, because of my position, hear a lot of sentimental, Communist lies, "Communist fibbing," every day, and sometimes we get mortally sick of them. But now instead of these "Communist fibs" I get a copy of *Smyena Vekh*, which says quite plainly: "Things are by no means what you imagine them to be. As a matter of fact you are slipping into the ordinary bourgeois morass with Communist flags inscribed with catchwords sticking all over the place." This is very useful. It is not a repetition of what we are constantly hearing around us, but the plain class truth uttered by the class enemy. It is very useful to read this sort of thing; and it was written not because the Communist state allows you to write some things and not others, but because it really is the class truth, bluntly and frankly uttered by the class enemy. "I am in favour of supporting the Soviet government," says Ustryalov, although he is a Constitutional-Democrat, a bourgeois, and supported intervention. "I am in favour of supporting the Soviet power because it has taken the road that will lead it to the ordinary bourgeois state."

---

* *Smyena Vekh*—a magazine published in Paris in 1921-22 by a group of Russian émigrés.—*Ed.*

This is very useful, and I think that we must keep it carefully in mind. It is much better for us for the *Smyena Vekh*-ites to write in that strain than for some of them to pretend to be almost Communists, so that from a distance one cannot tell whether they believe in God or in the Communist revolution. We must say frankly that such candid enemies are useful. We must say frankly that what Ustryalov says is possible. History knows all sorts of metamorphoses. Those who rely on firmness of convictions, loyalty, and other splendid moral qualities, show that they do not take politics at all seriously. A few people may be endowed with splendid moral qualities, but historical issues are decided by vast masses, which, if the few do not suit them, may at times treat them none too politely.

There have been many cases of this kind; that is why we must welcome this frank utterance of the *Smyena Vekh*-ites. The enemy is speaking the class truth and is pointing to the danger that confronts us. The enemy is striving to make this danger inevitable. The *Smyena Vekh*-ites express the sentiments of thousands and tens of thousands of bourgeois, or of Soviet employees whose function it is to operate our new economic policy. This is the real and main danger. And that is why attention must be concentrated mainly on the question: "Who will win?" I have spoken about competition. No direct onslaught is being made on us now; nobody is clutching us by the throat. True, what will happen to-morrow—that we have yet to see; but today we are not being subjected to armed attack. Nevertheless, the fight against capitalist society has become a hundred times more fierce and dangerous, because we are not always able to tell enemies from friends. . . .

When I spoke about Communist competition I did not have Communist sympathies in mind, but the development of economic forms and social systems. This is not competition but, if not the last, then nearly the last, desperate, furious, life-and-death struggle between capitalism and Communism.

And here we must clearly put the question: Wherein lies our strength? and what do we lack? We have quite enough political power. I hardly think there is anyone here who will assert that on such-and-such a practical question, in such-and-such a business institution, the Communists, the Communist Party, lack sufficient power. The main economic power is in our hands. All the vital large enterprises, the railways, etc., are in our hands. The number of leased enterprises, although considerable in places, is on the whole insignificant; on the whole it is infinitesimal compared with the rest. The economic power in the hands of the proletarian state of Russia is quite adequate to ensure the transition to Communism. What then is lacking? That is clear; what is lacking is culture among that stratum of the Communists who perform the functions of administration. If we take Moscow with its 4,700 responsible Communists, and if we take that huge bureaucratic machine, that huge pile, we must ask: Who is directing whom? I doubt very much whether it can truthfully

be said that the Communists are directing this pile. To tell the trutl they are not directing, they are being directed. Something analogou happened here to what we were told in our history lessons when we wer children: sometimes one nation conquers another, the nation that conquer is the conqueror and the nation that is vanquished is the conquered natior This is simple and intelligible to all. But what happens to the cultur of these nations? Here things are not so simple. If the conquering natio is more cultured than the vanquished nation, the former imposes it culture upon the latter; but if the opposite is the case, the vanquishe nation imposes its culture upon the conqueror. Has something like thi happened in the capital of the R.S.F.S.R.? Have the 4,700 Communist (nearly a whole army division, and all of them the very best) becom influenced by an alien culture? True, the vanquished give the impressior that they enjoy a high level of culture. But this is not the case at all Their culture is at a miserably low and insignificant level. Nevertheless it is higher than ours. Miserable and low as it is, it is higher than that o our responsible Communist administrators, for the latter lack adminis trative ability. Communists who are put at the head of departments— and sometimes artful saboteurs deliberately put them in these position in order to use them as a shield—are often fooled. This is a very unpleas ant admission to make, or at all events, not a very pleasant one; but I think we must make it, for at present this is the pivot of the question. I think that this is the political lesson of the past year; and it is around this that the struggle will rage in 1922.

Will the responsible Communists of the R.S.F.S.R. and of the Russian Communist Party realize that they cannot administer; that they only imagine they are directing, but actually, they are being directed? If they realize this they will learn, of course; for this business can be learnt. But one must study hard to learn it, and this our people are not doing. They scatter orders and decrees right and left, but the result is quite different from what they want.

The competition and rivalry that we have placed on the order of the day by proclaiming the NEP is a serious business. It appears to be going on in all government offices; but as a matter of fact it is one of the forms of the struggle between two irreconcilably hostile classes. It is another form of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is a struggle that has not yet been brought to a head, and culturally it has not yet been brought to a head even in the central government departments in Moscow. Very often the bourgeois officials know the business better than our best Communists, who are endowed with authority and have every opportunity, but who cannot make the slightest use of their rights and authority.

I should like to quote a passage from a pamphlet by Alexander Todorsky. This pamphlet was published in Vesyegonsk (there is an uyezd town of that name in the Tver Province) on the first anniversary of the Soviet

Revolution in Russia, on November 7, 1918, a long, long time ago Evidently this Vesyegonsk comrade is a member of the Party I read the pamphlet a long time ago and I am not sure that I can quote it verbatim The gist of it is that the author set to work to equip two Soviet factories and for this purpose enlisted the services of two bourgeois He did this in the way these things were done at that time—threatened to imprison them and to confiscate their property They were enlisted for the task of restoring the factories We know how the services of the bourgeoisie were enlisted in 1918, so there is no need for me to go into details We do these things differently now But here is the conclusion he arrived at "This is only half the job It is not enough to defeat the bourgeoisie, to overpower them, they must be compelled to work for us "

Now these are remarkable words, remarkable words which show that even in the town of Vesyegonsk, even in 1918, there were some who properly understood the relation between the victorious proletariat and the vanquished bourgeoisie

When we rap the exploiters over the hands, render them innocuous, overpower them, it is only half the job In Moscow, however, ninety out of a hundred responsible officials imagine that all we have to do is to overpower, render innocuous and rap over the hands Very often what I have said about the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries and the Whiteguards is interpreted solely as rendering innocuous, rapping over the hands (and perhaps, not only over the hands, but over some other place) and overpowering But that is only half the job It was only half the job in 1918, when this was said by the Vesyegonsk comrade, now it is even less than one fourth We must make these hands work for us, and not have responsible Communards at the head of departments, enjoying rank and title, but actually swimming with the stream together with the bourgeoisie That is the whole point.

The idea of building Communist society exclusively with the hands of the Communists is childish, absolutely childish We Communists are but as drops in the ocean, drops in the ocean of the people We shall be able to lead the people along the road we have chosen only if we correctly determine it not only from the aspect of its world historical direction From that aspect, we have determined the road quite correctly, and this is corroborated by the situation in every country We must also determine it correctly for our own native land, for our country But this world historical direction is not the only factor Other factors are whether there will be intervention or not, and whether we shall be able to supply the peasants with goods in exchange for their grain The peasants will say "You are splendid fellows, you defended our country That is why we obeyed you But if you cannot run things, get out!" Yes, that is what the peasants will say

We Communists shall be able to direct our national economy if we succeed in utilizing the hands of the bourgeoisie in building up this eco

nomy of ours and in the meantime learn from this bourgeoisie and guide it along the road that we want it to go. But when a Communist imagines that he knows everything; when he says: "I am a responsible Communist, I have beaten enemies far more formidable than any salesman. We have fought at the front and have beaten far more formidable enemies"—it is the prevalence of moods of this kind that is killing us.

Rendering the exploiters innocuous, rapping them over the hands, clipping their wings, is the least important part of our task. That must be done; and our State Political Administration and our courts must do it more vigorously than they have up to now. They must remember that they are proletarian courts surrounded by enemies all the world over. This is not difficult; and in the main we have learnt to do it. Here a certain amount of pressure must be exercised; but that is easy.

To win the second part of the victory, *i.e.*, to build Communism with the hands of non-Communists, to acquire the practical ability to do what is economically necessary, we must establish a bond with peasant husbandry; we must satisfy the peasant, so that he shall say: "Hard and difficult as things are, painful as starvation is, I see a government which, while an unusual one, is doing something practical, real and palpably useful." We must see to it that the numerous elements with whom we are co-operating, and who far exceed us in number, shall work in such a way as to enable us to supervise them; we must learn to understand this work, and direct their hands so that they shall do something useful for Communism. This is the pivot of the present situation; for although individual Communists have understood and realized that it is necessary to enlist the non-Party people for this work, the rank-and-file of our Party have not. How many circulars have been written, how much has been said about this? But how much has been done during the past year? Nothing. Not a hundred, not five committees of our Party can show practical results. This shows how much we lag behind the requirements of the present time; how much we are still living in the traditions of 1918 and 1919. Those were great years; a great world-historical task was then accomplished. But if we only look back on those years and do not see the task that now confronts us, we shall certainly and absolutely be doomed. And the whole point is that we refuse to admit this.

I should now like to quote two practical examples to illustrate how we administer. I have said already that it would be more correct to take one of the State Trusts as an example, but I must ask you to excuse me for not being able to apply this proper method, for to do so it would have been necessary to study the concrete material concerning at least one State Trust. Unfortunately, I have been unable to do that, and so I will take two small examples. One example is the accusation of bureaucracy levelled at the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade by the Moscow Consumers' Co-operative Society. The other example I will take from the Donetz Basin.

The first example is not quite relevant—I am unable to find a better—but it will serve to illustrate my main point. As you know from the newspapers, I have been unable to deal with affairs directly during the past few months. I have not been attending the Council of People's Commissars or the Central Committee. During the temporary and rare visits I made to Moscow I was struck by the desperate and alarming complaints levelled at the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade. I have never doubted for a moment that the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade functions badly and that it is tied up with red tape. But when the complaints became particularly bitter I tried to investigate the matter, to take a concrete example and get to the bottom of it; to ascertain the cause, to ascertain why the machine was not working.

The Moscow Consumers' Co-operative Society wanted to purchase a quantity of canned goods. In this connection a French citizen appeared on the scene. I do not know whether he did it in the interests of international politics and with the knowledge of the leaders of the Entente, or with the approval of Poincaré and the other enemies of the Soviet government (I think our historians will investigate and reveal this after the Genoa Conference), but the fact is that the French bourgeoisie took not only a theoretical, but also a practical interest in this business, as a representative of the French bourgeoisie happened to be in Moscow and had canned goods to sell. Moscow is starving; in the summer it will starve still more; no meat has been delivered, and knowing the merits of our Commissariat for Ways and Communications, probably none will be delivered.

An offer is made to sell canned meat (the future investigation will show whether it had gone entirely bad or not) for Soviet currency. What could be simpler? If the matter is approached in a real Soviet way, however, it turns out to be not so simple. I was unable to go into the matter personally, but I ordered an investigation and I have before me the report which shows how this celebrated case developed. It started with the decision adopted on February 11 by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party on the report of Kamenev on the desirability of purchasing provisions abroad. Of course, how could a Russian citizen decide such a question without the consent of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party? Think of it! How could 4,700 responsible officials (and this is only according to the census) decide a matter like purchasing provisions abroad without the consent of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee? This would be something supernatural, of course. Evidently, Kamenev understands our policy and the realities of our position perfectly well, and therefore, he did not place too much reliance on the numerous responsible officials. He started by taking the bull by the horns—if not the bull, at all events the Political Bureau—and without any difficulty (I did not hear that there was any discussion

over the matter) obtained a resolution stating: "To call the att of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade to the desirability porting provisions from abroad; the import duties. . . ." etc. The tion of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade was drawn tc Things began to move. This was on February 11. I remember that occasion to be in Moscow at the very end of February, or about that and what did I find? The complaints, the despairing complaints Moscow comrades. "What's the matter?" I ask. "We can't purchase provisions nohow." "Why?" "Because of the red tape of the Pe Commissariat for Foreign Trade." I had not been taking part in for a long time and I did not know that the Political Bureau had ad a decision on the matter. I merely ordered the Executive Secreta our Council to investigate, to draw up a report and submit it to me. matter ended when Krassin arrived. Kamenev discussed the matter him; the transaction was arranged, and the canned meat was purch All's well that ends well.

I have not the least doubt that Kamenev and Krassin can come understanding and properly determine the political line desired b Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Comm Party. If the political line on commercial matters were decided by K nev and Krassin our Soviet Republic would be the best republic i world. But Kamenev, a member of the Political Bureau, and Kras the latter is busy with diplomatic affairs connected with Genoa, a which have entailed an enormous, an excessive amount of labc cannot be dragged into every transaction, dragged into the bus of buying canned goods from a French citizen. That is not the to work. This is not new, not economic, and not a policy, but mockery. Now I have the report of the investigation into this ma In fact, I have two reports: one, the report of the investigation by Gorbunov, the Executive Secretary of the Council of People's Com sars, and his assistant, Miroshnikov; and the other, the report of investigation made by the State Political Administration. I do not k why the latter interested itself in the matter, and I am not quite whether it was proper for it to do so; but I will not go into that because I am afraid this might entail another investigation. The impor thing is that material on the matter has been collected and I now h it before me.

On arriving in Moscow at the end of February I heard bitter complai "We cannot buy the canned goods," although there was a ship in Lil and canned goods there, and the owners were prepared to take Soviet rency for real canned goods! If these canned goods are not entirely (and I now emphasize the "if," because I am not sure that I shall call for another investigation, the results of which, however, we s have to report at the next Congress), if, I say, these goods are not ent ly bad and they have been purchased, I ask: Why could not this ma

have been settled without Kamenev and Krassin? From the report I have before me I gather that one responsible Communist sent another responsible Communist to the devil I also gather from this report that one responsible Communist said to another responsible Communist "I shall not talk to you in the future except in the presence of a notary " Reading this report I recalled the time when I was in exile in Siberia, twenty five years ago, and had occasion to act in the capacity of a lawyer I was not a certified lawyer, because, being summarily exiled, I was not allowed to practise, but as there was no other lawyer in the region, people came and confided their troubles to me But sometimes I had the greatest difficulty in understanding what the trouble was A woman came to me and, of course, started telling me a long story about her relatives, and it was incredibly difficult to get from her what she really wanted Then she told me a story about a white cow I said to her "Bring me a copy "* She then went off complaining "He won't hear what I have to say unless I bring a copy of the white cow " In our colony we had a hearty laugh over this copy But I was able to make some progress People came to me, brought copies of the necessary documents, and I was able to gather what their trouble was, what they complained of, what ailed them This was twenty five years ago, in Siberia, in a place many hundreds of versts from the nearest railway station

But why was it necessary, three years after the revolution, in the capital of the Soviet Republic, to have two investigations, the intervention of Kamenev and Krassin and the instructions of the Political Bureau to purchase canned goods? What was lacking? Political power? No They found the money, so they had economic as well as political power All the necessary institutions were available What was lacking, then? Culture Ninety nine out of every hundred of the officials of the Moscow Consumers' Co operative Society—against whom I have no complaint to make whatever, and whom I regard as excellent Communists—and of the Commissariat for Foreign Trade—lack culture They were unable to approach a subject in a cultured manner

When I first heard of the matter I sent the following written proposal to the Central Committee "Put all the officials of the Moscow government departments—except the members of the All Russian Central Executive Committee, who, as you know, enjoy immunity—in the worst prison in Moscow for six hours, and those of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade for thirty six hours ' And then it transpired that no one could say who the culprits were, and from what I have told you it is evident that the culprits will never be discovered It is simply the usual inability of the Russian intellectual to do practical things—inefficiency and slovenliness First they bustle around, do something, and then think about it, and when nothing comes of it, they run to complain to

* *I e*, of a document connected with the case —*Ed*

Kamenev and want the matter to be brought up at the Political Bureau. Of course, all difficult state problems should be brought before the Political Bureau—I shall have to say something about that later on—but they should think first and then act. If you want to bring up a case, submit the appropriate documents. First send a message, we still have telephones in Moscow; send a telephone message to the competent department and a copy to Tsyurupa saying: "I regard the transaction as urgent and will take proceedings against any red tape." One must think of this elementary culture, one must approach a subject in a thoughtful manner. If the business is not settled in the course of a few minutes' telephone conversation, collect the documents and say: "If you start any of your red tape I shall have you clapped in gaol." But not a moment's thought is given to the matter, there is no preparation, the usual bustle, several commissions, everybody is tired out, exhausted, nauseated, and things begin to move only when Kamenev is put in touch with Krassin. All this is typical of what goes on not only in the capital, Moscow, but also in the other capitals, in the capitals of all the independent Republics and Regions. And the same thing, even a hundred times worse, constantly goes on in the provincial towns.

In our struggle we must remember that Communists must be thoughtful. We may be perfectly familiar with the revolutionary struggle and with the state of the revolutionary movement all over the world; but if we are to extricate ourselves from our desperate poverty and want we must be thoughtful, cultured and honest. Many of us lack these qualities. It would be unfair to say that the responsible Communists do not fulfil their functions conscientiously. The overwhelming majority of them, ninety-nine per cent, are not only conscientious. They proved their devotion to the revolution under the most difficult conditions before the fall of tsarism and after the revolution. They literally risked their lives. Therefore, it would be radically wrong to attribute the trouble to lack of conscientiousness. We need a cultured approach to the simplest affairs of state. We must all understand that this is a matter of state, a business matter; and if obstacles arise we must be able to overcome them and take proceedings against those who are guilty of red tape. I think the proletarian courts will be able to punish the guilty; but, in order to punish, the culprits must be found. I assure you that in this case no culprits will be found. Look into this business, all of you. No one is guilty; all we see is a lot of fuss and bustle and nonsense. . . . Nobody has the ability to approach the business properly; nobody understands that affairs of state must not be approached in this way. And all the Whiteguards and saboteurs take advantage of this. At one time we waged a fierce struggle against the saboteurs; that struggle confronts us even now. There are saboteurs, today, of course, and they must be fought. But can we fight them when the position is as I have just described it? This is worse than any sabotage. The saboteur could wish for nothing better than that two Commu-

have been settled without Kamenev and Krassin? From the report I have before me I gather that one responsible Communist sent another responsible Communist to the devil I also gather from this report that one responsible Communist said to another responsible Communist "I shall not talk to you in the future except in the presence of a notary." Reading this report I recalled the time when I was in exile in Siberia, twenty-five years ago, and had occasion to act in the capacity of a lawyer. I was not a certified lawyer, because, being summarily exiled, I was *not allowed to practise*, but as there was no other lawyer in the region, people came and confided their troubles to me But sometimes I had the greatest difficulty in understanding what the trouble was A woman came to me and, of course, started telling me a long story about her relatives, and it was incredibly difficult to get from her what she really wanted Then she told me a story about a white cow I said to her "Bring me a copy "* She then went off complaining "He won't hear what I have to say unless I bring a copy of the white cow " In our colony we had a hearty laugh over this copy But I was able to make some progress People came to me, brought copies of the necessary documents, and I was able to gather what their trouble was, what they complained of, what ailed them This was twenty-five years ago, in Siberia, in a place many hundreds of versts from the nearest railway station

But why was it necessary, three years after the revolution, in the capital of the Soviet Republic, to have two investigations, the intervention of Kamenev and Krassin and the instructions of the Political Bureau to purchase canned goods? What was lacking? Political power? No They found the money, so they had economic as well as political power All the necessary institutions were available What was lacking, then? Culture. Ninety nine out of every hundred of the officials of the Moscow Consumers' Co operative Society—against whom I have no complaint to make whatever, and whom I regard as excellent Communists—and of the Commissariat for Foreign Trade—lack culture They were unable to approach a subject in a cultured manner

When I first heard of the matter I sent the following written proposal to the Central Committee "Put all the officials of the Moscow government departments—except the members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, who, as you know, enjoy immunity—in the worst prison in Moscow for six hours, and those of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade for thirty six hours " And then it transpired that no one could say who the culprits were, and from what I have told you it is evident that the culprits will never be discovered It is simply the usual inability of the Russian intellectual to do practical things—inefficiency and slovenliness First they bustle around, do something, and then think about it, and when nothing comes of it, they run to complain to

* *I e* , of a document connected with the case —*Ed*

Kamenev and want the matter to be brought up at the Political Bureau. Of course, all difficult state problems should be brought before the Political Bureau—I shall have to say something about that later on—but they should think first and then act. If you want to bring up a case, submit the appropriate documents. First send a message, we still have telephones in Moscow; send a telephone message to the competent department and a copy to Tsyurupa saying: "I regard the transaction as urgent and will take proceedings against any red tape." One must think of this elementary culture, one must approach a subject in a thoughtful manner. If the business is not settled in the course of a few minutes' telephone conversation, collect the documents and say: "If you start any of your red tape I shall have you clapped in gaol." But not a moment's thought is given to the matter, there is no preparation, the usual bustle, several commissions, everybody is tired out, exhausted, nauseated, and things begin to move only when Kamenev is put in touch with Krassin. All this is typical of what goes on not only in the capital, Moscow, but also in the other capitals, in the capitals of all the independent Republics and Regions. And the same thing, even a hundred times worse, constantly goes on in the provincial towns.

In our struggle we must remember that Communists must be thoughtful. We may be perfectly familiar with the revolutionary struggle and with the state of the revolutionary movement all over the world; but if we are to extricate ourselves from our desperate poverty and want we must be thoughtful, cultured and honest. Many of us lack these qualities. It would be unfair to say that the responsible Communists do not fulfil their functions conscientiously. The overwhelming majority of them, ninety-nine per cent, are not only conscientious. They proved their devotion to the revolution under the most difficult conditions before the fall of tsarism and after the revolution. They literally risked their lives. Therefore, it would be radically wrong to attribute the trouble to lack of conscientiousness. We need a cultured approach to the simplest affairs of state. We must all understand that this is a matter of state, a business matter; and if obstacles arise we must be able to overcome them and take proceedings against those who are guilty of red tape. I think the proletarian courts will be able to punish the guilty; but, in order to punish, the culprits must be found. I assure you that in this case no culprits will be found. Look into this business, all of you. No one is guilty; all we see is a lot of fuss and bustle and nonsense. . . . Nobody has the ability to approach the business properly; nobody understands that affairs of state must not be approached in this way. And all the Whiteguards and saboteurs take advantage of this. At one time we waged a fierce struggle against the saboteurs; that struggle confronts us even now. There are saboteurs, today, of course, and they must be fought. But can we fight them when the position is as I have just described it? This is worse than any sabotage. The saboteur could wish for nothing better than that two Commu-

nists should argue over the question of when to appeal to the Political Bureau for instructions on the principle of buying provisions; and of course, he would soon slip in between them and egg them on. If any intelligent saboteur were to stand behind these Communists, or behind each of them in turn, and encourage them, that would be the end. Our cause would be doomed forever. Who is to blame? Nobody, because two responsible Communists, devoted revolutionaries are arguing about last year's snow; are arguing over the question of when to appeal to the Political Bureau for instructions on the principle of buying provisions.

This is the problem and the difficulty that confronts us. Any salesman who has received any training in a large capitalist enterprise could settle a matter like that; but ninety-nine responsible Communists out of a hundred cannot. And they refuse to understand that they cannot and that they must learn from the ABC. Unless we realize this, unless we sit down in the preparatory class again, we shall never be able to solve the economic problem that now lies at the basis of our entire policy.

The other example I wanted to give you is that of the Donetz Basin. You know that this is the centre, the real basis of our entire national economy. It will be utterly impossible to restore large-scale industry in Russia, to build up Socialism—for it can only be built with the aid of large-scale industry—unless we restore the Donetz Basin and bring it up to the proper standard. The Central Committee is closely watching developments there.

As regards this region there was no unjustified, ridiculous or absurd raising of minor questions in the Political Bureau; real, absolutely urgent business was discussed.

The Central Committee ought to see to it that in such real centres, bases and foundations of our entire economy work is carried on in a real, businesslike manner. At the head of the Central Coal Industry Board we had not only devoted, but really educated and very capable people. I should not be wrong if I even said talented people. That is why the Central Committee has concentrated its attention on it. The Ukraine is an independent republic. That is quite all right. But in Party matters it sometimes—what is the politest way of saying it?—takes a roundabout course, and we have to get at them somehow. For the people there are sly, and—I shall not say deceive the Central Committee—but somehow, edge away from us. To obtain a general view of the whole business we discussed it in the Central Committee here and discovered that friction and disagreement exist. There is a Commission for the Utilization of Small Mines there and, of course, severe friction there between it and the Central Coal Industry Board. Still, we, the Central Committee, have a certain amount of experience and we unanimously decided not to remove the leading people, but ordered that we be kept informed of any friction, even down to the smallest detail. For since we have not only

devoted but capable people in the region, we must back them up, so that they may finish their education, assuming that they have not done so. In the end, a Party Congress was held in the Ukraine—I do not know what came of it; all sorts of things happened. I asked for information from the Ukrainian comrades, and I asked Comrade Orjonikidze particularly—and the Central Committee did the same—to go down there and ascertain what had happened. Evidently, there was some intrigue and an awful mess, which the History of the Party Commission would not be able to clear up in ten years should it undertake to do so. But the upshot of it all was that contrary to the unanimous instructions of the Central Committee, this group was superseded by another group. What was the matter? In the main, notwithstanding all its good qualities, a section of this group committed a mistake. They were over-zealous in their methods of administration. There we have to deal with workers. Very often the word "workers" is taken to mean the factory proletariat. But it does not mean that at all. During the war people who were not proletarians at all went into the factories; they went into the factories to dodge the war. Are the social and economic conditions in our country today such as to induce real proletarians to go into the factories? No. It would be true according to Marx; but Marx did not write about Russia; he wrote about capitalism as a whole, beginning with the fifteenth century. It held true over a period of six hundred years, but it is not true for present-day Russia. Very often those who go into the factories are not proletarians; they are casual elements of all kinds.

The problem is to learn to organize the work properly; not to lag behind; to remove friction; not to divorce administration from politics. For our administration and our politics rest on the ability of the entire vanguard to maintain contact with the entire mass of the proletariat and with the entire mass of the peasantry. If anybody forgets these cogs, or becomes wholly absorbed in administration, the result will be disaster. The mistake our men committed in the Donetz Basin is insignificant compared with other mistakes we have committed, but this example is a typical one. The Central Committee unanimously ordered: "Allow this group to remain; bring all conflicts, even minor ones, before the Central Committee; for the Donetz Basin is not an ordinary district, but a vital one; for without it Socialist construction would simply remain a pious wish." But all our political power, all the authority of the Central Committee proved of no avail.

This time a mistake in administration was committed, of course: in addition, a host of other mistakes were committed.

This case shows that it is not a matter of possessing political power, but the lack of administrative ability, the ability to put the right man in the right place, the ability to avoid petty conflicts, so that state economic work may be carried on without interruption. This is what is lacking; this is the root of the mistake.

I think that in discussing our revolution and weighing up its prospects, we must carefully single out the problems which the revolution has solved completely and which have irrevocably gone down in history as an epoch making departure from capitalism. Our revolution has such solutions to its credit. Let the Mensheviks and Otto Bauer, the representative of the Two and a Half International, shout 'Theirs is a bourgeois revolution.' We say that our task was to consummate the bourgeois revolution. As a certain Whiteguard newspaper expressed it "Dung accumulated in our state institutions for four hundred years, but we cleaned it all out in four years. This is the great service we rendered. What have the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries done? Nothing. They could not clear up the dung of mediaevalism in our country, nor can they do so in advanced, enlightened Germany. They abuse us for doing what stands very much to our credit. The fact that we have consummated the revolution is an achievement that can never be expunged from our record.

War is now in the air. The trade unions, for example, the reformist trade unions, are passing resolutions against war and are threatening to call strikes in opposition to war. Recently, if I am not mistaken, I read a report in the newspapers to the effect that a certain very good Communist delivered an anti war speech in the French Chamber of Deputies in the course of which he stated that the workers would prefer to rise in revolt rather than go to war. This question cannot be formulated in the way we formulated it in 1912, when the Basle Manifesto was issued. The Russian revolution alone has shown how it is possible to emerge from war, and what effort this entails. It showed what emerging from a reactionary war by revolutionary methods means. Reactionary imperialist wars are inevitable in all parts of the world, and in solving problems of this sort mankind cannot and will not forget that tens of millions were slaughtered then, and will be slaughtered again if war breaks out. We are living in the twentieth century, and the only nation that was extricated from a reactionary war by revolutionary methods not for the benefit of a particular government, but by overthrowing it, was the Russian nation, and it was the Russian revolution that extricated it. What has been won by the Russian revolution is irrevocable. No power on earth can deprive us of that, nor can any power on earth deprive us of what the Soviet state has already created. This is a world historic victory. For hundreds of years states have been built according to the bourgeois model, and for the first time a non bourgeois form of state has been discovered. Our machinery of government may be faulty, but it is said that the first steam engine that was invented was also faulty. No one even knows whether it worked or not, but that is not the important point, the important point is that it was invented. Even assuming that the first steam engine was badly constructed, the fact is that we now have steam engines. Even if our machinery of government is very faulty, the fact remains that it

has been created; the greatest invention in history has been discovered; a proletarian type of state has been created. Therefore, let all Europe, let thousands of bourgeois newspapers broadcast news about the alleged horrors and poverty that prevail in our country, about suffering being the sole lot of the toilers in our country; the workers all over the world are drawn towards the Soviet state for all that. These are the great and irrevocable gains that we have achieved. But for us, the representatives of the Communist Party, this meant only opening the door. We are now confronted with the task of laying the foundations of Socialist economy. Has this been done? No, it has not. We still lack the Socialist foundation. Those Communists who imagine that we have it are greatly mistaken. The whole point is to distinguish firmly, clearly and dispassionately what represents the world-historic service rendered by the Russian revolution from what we do very badly, from what has not yet been created, and what we shall have to alter many times yet.

Political events are always very confused and complicated. They can be compared with a chain. To grasp the whole chain it is no use clutching at any link at random; it is no use arbitrarily choosing a link. What was the pivot of events in 1917? Withdrawal from the war. The entire nation demanded this, and it overshadowed everything. Revolutionary Russia extricated herself from the war. This cost tremendous effort; but the major demand of the people was satisfied, and this brought us victory for many years. . . . The people realized, the peasants saw, every soldier who returned from the front understood perfectly well that the Soviet government was a more democratic government, one that stood closer to the toilers. No matter how many outrageous and absurd things we may have done in other spheres, the fact that we took this main task into account proved that everything was right.

What was the pivot in 1919 and 1920? Military resistance. The enemy was marching against us; the world-powerful Entente was at our throats. No propaganda was required here. Every non-Party peasant understood what was going on. The landlords were coming back. The Communists knew how to fight them. That is why, taken in the mass, the peasants followed the lead of the Communists; that is why we were victorious.

In 1921 the pivot was an orderly retreat. This required stern discipline. The "Workers' Opposition" said: "You are underrating the workers; the workers should display greater initiative." But initiative had to be displayed then by retreating in good order and in maintaining stern discipline. Anyone who introduced a note of panic or of insubordination would have doomed the revolution to defeat; for there is nothing more difficult than retreating with people who have been accustomed to victory, who are imbued with revolutionary views and ideals, and who, in their hearts, regard every retreat as a disgraceful matter. The greatest danger was the violation of good order, and the greatest task was to maintain good order.

severe it will be beneficial in that it will help to comb the ranks of the responsible Communists engaged in the business departments not in the way the Central Control Commission and the Central Verification Commission comb them, but very thoroughly

The third condition is that we shall make no political mistakes in this period Of course, if we do make political mistakes all our work of economic construction will be disrupted and we shall land ourselves in controversies about how to rectify them and what direction to pursue If we make no bad mistakes, the pivot in the near future will not be decrees and politics in the narrow sense of the word, not departments and their organization—the responsible Communists and the Soviet institutions will deal with these things if necessary—the pivot of all our activities will be choosing the right people and executive control If we learn something practical, if we do something practically useful in this field, we shall again overcome all difficulties

In conclusion I must deal with the practical side of the question of the relation between the Party and the higher government bodies The relations between the Party and the Soviet government bodies are not what they ought to be On this we are quite unanimous I have given you one example to show that concrete minor matters are dragged before thePolitical Bureau It is difficult to solve this problem formally, for there is only one governing Party at the head of affairs in our country, and a member of the Party can not be prohibited from lodging complaints That is why everything that comes up on the Council of People s Commissars is dragged before the Political Bureau I, too, am greatly to blame for this, for to a large extent contact between the Council of People's Commissars and the Political Bureau was maintained through me When I was obliged to retire from work it was found that the two wheels were not working in unison and Kamenev had to bear a treble load to maintain this contact It is hardly likely that I shall return to work in the near future, and so all our hopes rest on the fact that we now have two more Vice Chairmen—Comrade Tsyurupa, whom the Germans have purged, and Rykov, whom the Germans have given a good clean out Even Wilhelm, the German Emperor, has proved useful to us, I did not expect it Rykov has been under the medical treatment of Wilhelm s surgeon, the latter cut out Rykov's worse part and kept it in Germany, and leaving the better part of Rykov he sent him back to us completely purged If this system is continued in the future things will go very well

But joking aside, a word or two about the main instructions On this point there is complete unanimity on the Central Committee, and I hope that the Congress will pay the closest attention to it and endorse the instruction that the Political Bureau and the Central Committee be relieved of minor matters, and that the responsible officials should take greater responsibility upon themselves The People's Commissars must be responsible for their work and should not bring these matters up first on the Council of

People's Commissars and then on the Political Bureau. Formally, we cannot abolish the right to lodge complaints with the Central Committee, for our Party is the only governing party in the country. But we must put a stop to the habit of bringing every petty matter before the Central Committee; we must raise the prestige of the Council of People's Commissars. The Commissars and not the Vice-Commissars must mainly attend the meetings of the Council. The functions of the Council must be changed in the direction that I have not succeeded in changing them during the past year, *viz.*, it must pay much more attention to executive control. We shall have two more Vice-Chairmen—Rykov and Tsyurupa. Rykov, when he was on the Special Army Supplies Commission, succeeded in putting it on its feet, and that body has been working well. Tsyurupa has organized one of the best of our People's Commissariats.* If both of them devote the maximum of attention to tightening up the People's Commissariats as regards executive control and responsibility, we shall make some, even if slight, progress. We have eighteen People's Commissariats. Of these, at least fifteen are absolutely no good. We cannot find good People's Commissars everywhere, and so it will be a good thing if our comrades devote more attention to these matters. Rykov should be a member of the Bureau of the Central Committee and a member of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, because contact must be maintained between these two bodies, otherwise the main wheels will, at times, be turning to no purpose.

In this connection we must see to it that the number of commissions of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence is reduced. The latter must know and settle their own affairs and not split up into an infinite number of commissions. A few days ago the commissions were overhauled. It was found that there were one hundred and twenty of them. How many were necessary? Sixteen. And this is not the first cut. Instead of taking responsibility for their work, preparing the decisions for the Council of People's Commissars and knowing that they are responsible for this, the leading comrades take shelter behind commissions. The Devil himself would lose his way in this maze of commissions. Nobody knows what is going on, who is responsible; everything is mixed up, and finally a decision is passed to the effect that everybody is responsible.

In this connection reference must be made to the need for extending and developing the autonomy and activities of the Regional Economic Conferences. The administrative division of Russia has now been drawn up on scientific lines; the economic, climatic and social conditions, the conditions of obtaining fuel, of local industry, etc., have all been taken into account. On the basis of this division, District and Regional Economic Conferences have been instituted. Changes may be made here and there, of course, but the prestige of these Economic Conferences must be raised.

* Lenin has in mind the People's Commissariat for Food.—*Ed.*

about which they know nothing; and they prevent us from seeing the truth, for rogues and rascals hide behind their backs. The trouble is that we have no such thing as executive control. This is a prosaic job, a small job; these are petty affairs. But after the greatest political change that has ever taken place in history, bearing in mind that for a time we shall have to live in the midst of the capitalist system, the pivot is not politics in the narrow sense of the word (what we read in the newspapers is just political fireworks; there is nothing Socialistic in it at all), the pivot is not resolutions, not departments and not reorganization. We shall reorganize if it is necessary; but don't go to the people with that sort of thing. Choose the proper men and introduce executive control. This the people will appreciate.

Among the people we are as a drop in the ocean, and we can administer only when we properly express what the people are conscious of. Unless we do this the Communist Party will not lead the proletariat, the proletariat will not lead the masses, and the whole machine will collapse. The fundamental thing in the eyes of the people and of the masses of the working people today is: what assistance can they receive in their desperate condition of want and starvation? They want some real evidence of the improvement that the peasant needs, and wants in the form that he is accustomed to. The peasant knows, is accustomed to the market and trade. We were unable to introduce direct Communist distribution. We lacked the factories and their equipment for this. That being the case, we must provide the peasants with what they need through the medium of trade, and provide it as well as the capitalist did, otherwise the people will not tolerate such an administration. This is the pivot of the situation; and unless something unexpected arises, this should be the pivot of our activities in 1922 given three conditions.

The first condition is that there shall be no intervention. We are doing all we can in the diplomatic field to avoid it; nevertheless, it may occur any day. We must really be on the alert, and we must agree to make certain big sacrifices for the sake of the Red Army, within definite limits, of course. We are confronted by the entire bourgeois world, which is only seeking the form in which to strangle us. Our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries are nothing more nor less than the agents of the bourgeoisie. Such is their political status.

The second condition is that the financial crisis shall not be too severe. The crisis is approaching. You will hear about that when we discuss financial policy. If it is too severe and arduous we shall have to revise many things again and concentrate all efforts on one thing. If it is not too severe it may even be useful; it will give the Communists in all the State Trusts a good shaking; only we must not forget to do this. The financial crisis will shake up the government departments and the industrial enterprises, and the unfit will be the first to collapse; only we must take care that all the blame for this is not thrown on the specialists while the responsible Communists are praised for being very good fellows who have fought at the fronts and have always worked well. Thus, if the financial crisis is not too

And what is the pivot now? The pivot now—and I would like to sum up my report with this—is not that we have changed our line of policy An incredible lot of nonsense is being talked about this in connection with the NEP It is all hot air, pernicious twaddle In connection with the NEP some people are beginning to fuss around, proposing to reorganize our government departments and to form new ones All this is pernicious twaddle. In the present situation the pivot is men, the proper choice of men A revolutionary who is accustomed to combat tinkering reformists and uplift educators finds it hard to understand that the role of the individuals and not the reorganization of government departments has now come to the front Soberly weighed up, the political conclusion to be drawn from the present situation is that we advanced so far that we cannot hold all the positions, and we need not hold them all

During the past few years our international position has vastly improved. The Soviet type of state is our achievement, it is a step forward in human progress, and the information the Communist International receives from every country every day corroborates this Nobody has the slightest doubt about that From the point of view of practical work, however, the position is that unless the Communists render the masses of the peasants practical assistance they will lose their support Passing laws, passing better decrees, etc , are not now the main object of our attention There was a time when the passing of decrees was a form of propaganda People used to laugh at us and say that the Bolsheviks do not realize that their decrees are not being carried out, the entire Whiteguard press was full of jeers of this sort But at that period this passing of decrees was quite justified We Bolsheviks had just taken power, and we said to the rank and file peasant, to the rank and file worker "Here is a decree, this is how we would like to have the state administered Try it!" From the very outset we gave the common workers and peasants an idea of our policy in the form of decrees The result was the enormous confidence we enjoyed and now enjoy among the masses of the people This was an essential period at the beginning of the revolution, without it we should not have risen on the crest of the revolutionary wave, we should have dragged in its wake Without it we should not have won the confidence of all the workers and peasants who wanted to build their lives on new lines But this period has passed, and we refuse to understand this Now the peasants and workers will laugh at us if we order this or that government department to be formed or reorganized The common workers and peasants will display no interest in this now, and they will be right, because this is not the central task now This is not the sort of thing with which we Communists should now go to the people Although we who are engaged in government departments are always overwhelmed with so many petty affairs, this is not the link that we must grasp, this is not the pivot The pivot is that we have not the right men in the right place, that responsible Communists who acquitted themselves magnificently during the revolution have been given commercial and industrial functions

about which they know nothing; and they prevent us from seeing the t
for rogues and rascals hide behind their backs. The trouble is that we
no such thing as executive control. This is a prosaic job, a small job;
are petty affairs. But after the greatest political change that has ever t
place in history, bearing in mind that for a time we shall have to li
the midst of the capitalist system, the pivot is not politics in the na
sense of the word (what we read in the newspapers is just political firew
there is nothing Socialistic in it at all), the pivot is not resolutions, no
partments and not reorganization. We shall reorganize if it is neces
but don't go to the people with that sort of thing. Choose the proper
and introduce executive control. This the people will appreciate.

Among the people we are as a drop in the ocean, and we can admin
only when we properly express what the people are conscious of. Unles
do this the Communist Party will not lead the proletariat, the prolet
will not lead the masses, and the whole machine will collapse. The fu
mental thing in the eyes of the people and of the masses of the working
ple today is: what assistance can they receive in their desperate condi
of want and starvation? They want some real evidence of the improver
that the peasant needs, and wants in the form that he is accustomed to.
peasant knows, is accustomed to the market and trade. We were unab
introduce direct Communist distribution. We lacked the factories and t
equipment for this. That being the case, we must provide the peasants
what they need through the medium of trade, and provide it as well as
capitalist did, otherwise the people will not tolerate such an administrat
This is the pivot of the situation; and unless something unexpected ar
this should be the pivot of our activities in 1922 given three conditi

The first condition is that there shall be no intervention. We are do
all we can in the diplomatic field to avoid it; nevertheless, it may occur
day. We must really be on the alert, and we must agree to make certain
sacrifices for the sake of the Red Army, within definite limits, of cou
We are confronted by the entire bourgeois world, which is only seeking
form in which to strangle us. Our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutiona
are nothing more nor less than the agents of the bourgeoisie. Such is t
political status.

The second condition is that the financial crisis shall not be too sev
The crisis is approaching. You will hear about that when we discuss fir
cial policy. If it is too severe and arduous we shall have to revise m
things again and concentrate all efforts on one thing. If it is not too sev
it may even be useful; it will give the Communists in all the State Trus
good shaking; only we must not forget to do this. The financial crisis v
shake up the government departments and the industrial enterprises,
the unfit will be the first to collapse; only we must take care that all
blame for this is not thrown on the specialists while the responsible Co
munists are praised for being very good fellows who have fought at
fronts and have always worked well. Thus, if the financial crisis is not

severe it will be beneficial in that it will help to comb the ranks of the responsible Communists engaged in the business departments not in the way the Central Control Commission and the Central Verification Commission comb them, but very thoroughly

The third condition is that we shall make no political mistakes in this period Of course, if we do make political mistakes all our work of economic construction will be disrupted and we shall land ourselves in controversies about how to rectify them and what direction to pursue If we make no bad mistakes, the pivot in the near future will not be decrees and politics in the narrow sense of the word, not departments and their organization—the responsible Communists and the Soviet institutions will deal with these things if necessary—the pivot of all our activities will be choosing the right people and executive control If we learn something practical, if we do something practically useful in this field, we shall again overcome all difficulties

In conclusion I must deal with the practical side of the question of the relation between the Party and the higher government bodies The relations between the Party and the Soviet government bodies are not what they ought to be On this we are quite unanimous I have given you one example to show that concrete minor matters are dragged before the Political Bureau It is difficult to solve this problem formally, for there is only one governing Party at the head of affairs in our country, and a member of the Party cannot be prohibited from lodging complaints That is why everything that comes up on the Council of People's Commissars is dragged before the Political Bureau I, too, am greatly to blame for this, for to a large extent contact between the Council of People's Commissars and the Political Bureau was maintained through me When I was obliged to retire from work it was found that the two wheels were not working in unison and Kamenev had to bear a treble load to maintain this contact It is hardly likely that I shall return to work in the near future, and so all our hopes rest on the fact that we now have two more Vice Chairmen—Comrade Tsyurupa, whom the Germans have purged, and Rykov, whom the Germans have given a good clean out Even Wilhelm, the German Emperor, has proved useful to us, I did not expect it Rykov has been under the medical treatment of Wilhelm's surgeon, the latter cut out Rykov's worse part and kept it in Germany, and leaving the better part of Rykov he sent him back to us completely purged If this system is continued in the future things will go very well

But joking aside, a word or two about the main instructions On this point there is complete unanimity on the Central Committee, and I hope that the Congress will pay the closest attention to it and endorse the instruction that the Political Bureau and the Central Committee be relieved of minor matters, and that the responsible officials should take greater responsibility upon themselves The People's Commissars must be responsible for their work and should not bring these matters up first on the Council of

e's Commissars and then on the Political Bureau. Formally, we can- bolish the right to lodge complaints with the Central Committee, ır Party is the only governing party in the country. But we must put ɔ to the habit of bringing every petty matter before the Central Com- ɛ; we must raise the prestige of the Council of People's Commissars. Commissars and not the Vice-Commissars must mainly attend the ngs of the Council. The functions of the Council must be changed in the ion that I have not succeeded in changing them during the past year, t must pay much more attention to executive control. We shall have ıore Vice-Chairmen—Rykov and Tsyurupa. Rykov, when he was on pecial Army Supplies Commission, succeeded in putting it on its feet, hat body has been working well. Tsyurupa has organized one of the f our People's Commissariats.* If both of them devote the maximum ention to tightening up the People's Commissariats as regards execu- control and responsibility, we shall make some, even if slight, ess. We have eighteen People's Commissariats. Of these, at least fif- are absolutely no good. We cannot find good People's Commissars where, and so it will be a good thing if our comrades devote more ion to these matters. Rykov should be a member of the Bureau of entral Committee and a member of the Presidium of the All-Russian al Executive Committee, because contact must be maintained between two bodies, otherwise the main wheels will, at times, be turning to ırpose.

this connection we must see to it that the number of commissions of ouncil of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and De- is reduced. The latter must know and settle their own affairs and not ıp into an infinite number of commissions. A few days ago the commis- were overhauled. It was found that there were one hundred and twen- hem. How many were necessary? Sixteen. And this is not the first cut. ıd of taking responsibility for their work, preparing the decisions for ouncil of People's Commissars and knowing that they are responsible is, the leading comrades take shelter behind commissions. The Devil lf would lose his way in this maze of commissions. Nobody knows what ng on, who is responsible; everything is mixed up, and finally a deci- passed to the effect that everybody is responsible.

this connection reference must be made to the need for extending and oping the autonomy and activities of the Regional Economic Confer- . The administrative division of Russia has now been drawn up on ific lines; the economic, climatic and social conditions, the conditions aining fuel, of local industry, etc., have all been taken into account. e basis of this division, District and Regional Economic Conferences been instituted. Changes may be made here and there, of course, but estige of these Economic Conferences must be raised.

Lenin has in mind the People's Commissariat for Food.—*Ed.*

Then we must see to it that the All-Russian Central Executive Committee works more energetically, meets in session more regularly, and for longer periods. The Sessions of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee should discuss bills which sometimes have been hastily brought before the Council of People's Commissars when there was no need to do so. It would be better to postpone such bills and give the local workers an opportunity to study them carefully. Stricter demands should be made upon those who draft the bills. This is not done.

If the Sessions of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee last longer, they can split up into sections and sub-commissions, and thus be able to verify the work more strictly and strive to achieve what in my opinion is the pivot, the quintessence of the present political situation: to concentrate attention on choosing the right people and on executive control.

It must be admitted, and we must not be afraid to admit, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the responsible Communists are not in the jobs they are now fit for; that they are unable to perform their duties, and that they must sit down to learn them. If this is admitted, and since we have the opportunity to learn—judging by the general international situation we shall have time to do so—we must do it, come what may.

Published in 1922 in *The Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Verbatim Report*

SPEECH IN CLOSING THE ELEVENTH CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

APRIL 2, 1922

Comrades, the proceedings of the Congress have now drawn to a close. The first difference that strikes one in comparing this Congress with the preceding one is the greater solidarity, the greater unanimity and greater organizational unity displayed at this Congress.

Only a small fraction of one of the sections of the opposition that existed at the last Congress has placed itself outside the Party.

On the trade union question and on the new economic policy no disagreements, or hardly any disagreements, have been revealed in our Party.

The radically and fundamentally "new" achievement of this Congress is that it has provided vivid proof that our enemies are wrong in constantly reiterating that our Party is becoming senile and is losing its flexibility of mind and body.

No. We have not lost this flexibility.

When the objective state of affairs in Russia, and all over the world, called for an advance, for a bold, swift and determined onslaught on the enemy, we made that onslaught. If necessary, we shall do so again and again.

By that we raised our revolution to a height hitherto unparalleled anywhere in the world. No power on earth, no matter how much evil, hardship and suffering it may yet cause millions and hundreds of millions of people, can deprive us of the major gains of our revolution; for these are no longer "our" gains, but world-historic gains.

But when, as was the case in the spring of 1921, the vanguard of the revolution was in danger of becoming divorced from the masses of the people, from the masses of the peasants, whom it must skilfully lead forward, we unanimously and firmly decided to retreat. And taken on the whole, during the past year we retreated in good revolutionary order.

The proletarian revolutions which are maturing in all advanced countries will be unable to solve their problems unless they combine their ability to fight heroically and to attack, with the ability to retreat in good revolutionary order. The experience of the second period of our struggle, *i.e.*, the experience of retreat, will probably be as useful to the workers of at all

events several countries in the future as the experience of the first period of our revolution, *i.e.*, the experience of bold attack, will undoubtedly be useful to the workers of all countries.

Now we have decided to stop the retreat.

This means that the entire object of our policy must be formulated in a new way.

The pivot of the situation now is that the vanguard must not shirk the task of educating itself, of remoulding itself, of frankly admitting that it is not sufficiently trained and lacks the necessary ability. The pivot now is to advance as an immeasurably wider and larger mass, essentially together with the peasantry, proving to them by deeds, in practice, by experience, that we are learning, and that we shall learn to assist them, to lead them forward. In the present international situation, in the present state of the productive forces of Russia, this problem can be solved only very slowly, cautiously, in a practical way, and by testing every step that is taken a thousand times in a practical way.

If voices are raised in our Party against this extremely slow and extremely cautious progress, these voices will be isolated ones.

The Party as a whole has understood—and will now prove by deeds that it has understood—that this is the only way its activities must be organized at the present time. And since we have understood it, we shall reach our goal!

I declare the Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party closed.

Published in 1922 in *The Eleventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Verbatim Report*

"DUAL" SUBORDINATION AND OBSERVATION OF THE LAW

TO COMRADE STALIN, FOR THE POLITICAL BUREAU

The question of the procuratorship has given rise to disagreement on the commission appointed by the Central Committee to direct the proceedings of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. If these disagreements do not cause this question to be brought before the Political Bureau automatically, I propose, in view of its extreme importance, that it be brought up in any case.

In substance, the point at issue is the following: On the question of the procuratorship, the majority of the commission elected by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee expressed opposition to the proposal that local procurators should be appointed solely by the central authority and be subordinate solely to the latter. The majority demands what is called "dual" subordination, the system that applies to all local officials, *i.e.*, subordination to the central authority in the shape of the respective People's Commissariat, and also to the Provincial Executive Committee.

The same majority of the commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee denies the right of local procurators to challenge the legality of decisions passed by Provincial Executive Committees, and of local authorities generally.

I cannot imagine on what grounds this obviously fallacious decision of the majority of the commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee can be justified. The only argument I have heard in support of it is that defence of "dual" subordination in this case means legitimate opposition to bureaucratic centralism, defending the necessary independence of the local authorities, and protecting the officials of the Provincial Executive Committee from the high-handed conduct of the central authorities. Is there anything high-handed in the view that law cannot be Kaluga law, or Kazan law, but All-Russian law, applicable uniformly to the entire Federation of Soviet Republics? The underlying fallacy of the view which has prevailed among the majority of the commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee is that they wrongly apply the principle of "dual" subordination. "Dual" subordination is needed where it is necessary

to allow for a really inevitable difference. Agriculture in the Kaluga Province differs from that in the Kazan Province. The same thing can be said about industry; and it can be said about administration, or government, as a whole. Failure to make allowances for local differences in all these matters, would mean slipping into bureaucratic centralism, and so forth; the local authorities would be unable to reckon with specific local features, which is the basis of all rational administration. Nevertheless, the law must be uniform, and the root evil of our social life, and of our lack of culture, is our pandering to the ancient Russian view and semi-savage habit of mind, which wishes to preserve Kaluga law, as distinct from Kazan law. It must be borne in mind that, unlike the administration authorities, the procurator has no administrative powers, and has no power to decide any question of administration. The procurator's rights and duties reduce themselves to one function, *viz.*, to see that the law is uniformly interpreted all over the Republic, notwithstanding differences in local conditions, and in spite of local influences. The only right and duty of the procurator is to take the matter before the court. What sort of court? Our courts are local courts. Our judges are elected by the local Soviets. Hence, the authority to which the procurator submits a case of infringement of the law is a local authority which, on the one hand, must strictly abide by the laws uniformly established for the whole Federation and, on the other hand, in determining the penalty, must take all local circumstances into consideration. And it has the right to say that although there has been a definite infringement of the law in a given case, nevertheless, certain circumstances, with which the local authorities are closely familiar, and which came to light in the local court, compel the court to mitigate the penalty to which the culprit is liable, or even acquit him. Unless we strictly adhere to this most elementary condition for maintaining the uniformity of the law for the whole Federation, it will be utterly impossible to protect the law, or to develop any kind of culture.

Similarly, it is wrong in principle to argue that procurators should not have the right to challenge the decisions of Provincial Executive Committees, or of other local authorities; that legally, the latter come under the jurisdiction of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection judges not only from the viewpoint of the law, but also from the viewpoint of expediency. The procurator must see to it that not a single decision passed by any local authority runs counter to the law, and only from this aspect is it his duty to challenge every illegal decision. He has no right to suspend such a decision; he can only take measures to secure that the interpretation of the law is absolutely uniform throughout the Republic. Hence, the decision of the majority of the commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee is not only utterly wrong in principle, it not only applies the principle of "dual" subordination in an utterly fallacious manner, but it will hinder all efforts to establish uniformity of the law and develop at least the minimum of culture.

Further, in deciding this question, it is necessary to take into account the importance of local influence. Undoubtedly, we are swimming in an ocean of illegality, and local influence is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, obstacle to the establishment of law and culture. There is scarcely an individual who has not heard that the purging of the Party revealed the prevalence, in the majority of local investigation committees, of personal spite and malice in the process of purging the Party. This fact is incontrovertible, and rather significant. Scarcely anyone will dare deny that it is easier for the Party to find half a score of reliable Communists who possess an adequate legal education and are capable of resisting all purely local influences than to find them in hundreds. And this is what the question boils down to in discussing whether procurators should be subject to "dual" subordination, or to subordination solely to the central authorities. At the centre we must find about half a score of men to exercise the functions of the Central Procurator Authority represented by the Procurator General, the Supreme Tribunal, and the Collegium of the People's Commissariat for Justice (I leave aside the question as to whether the Procurator General should be the sole authority, or whether he should share his authority with the Supreme Tribunal and the Collegium of the People's Commissariat for Justice, for this is a secondary question, and can be settled, one way or another, in accordance with whether the Party will vest one person with vast authority, or divide that authority among the three aforesaid bodies). These ten should work at the centre, under the closest supervision of and in closest contact with the three Party bodies which provide the most reliable barrier against local and personal influences, *viz.*, the Organization Bureau of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, and the Central Control Commission. The latter body, *i.e.*, the Central Control Commission, is responsible only to the Party Congress, and is built up in such a way that no member of it can have dual jobs in any People's Commissariat, government department, or any organ of the Soviet government. Under these circumstances, it is clear that we have the greatest guarantee so far devised, that the Party will set up a small central body that will be really capable of resisting local influences and local, and all other, bureaucracy, and which will establish real uniformity in the application of the laws throughout the Republic, and throughout the Federation. Hence, any mistake that this central legal body may make can be at once rectified by the Party organizations, which determine all the fundamental concepts and lay down all the fundamental rules for all our Party and Soviet activities throughout the Republic.

To depart from this means dragging in on the sly a view which nobody can defend openly and frankly, *viz.*, that culture, and law, which is its necessary concomitant, are so highly developed in this country that we can guarantee to find hundreds of absolutely irreproachable procurators capable of resisting all local influences, and of establishing uniformity of the law throughout the Republic by their own efforts.

To sum up, I draw the conclusion that to defend the "dual" subordination of procurators, and to deprive them of their right to challenge any decision passed by the local authorities, is not only wrong in principle, will not only hinder our fundamental task of steadily introducing respect for the law, but is also an expression of the interests and prejudices of local bureaucrats and local influences, *i.e.*, the most pernicious wall that stands between the working people and the local and central Soviet authorities, as well as the central authority of the Russian Communist Party.

I therefore propose that the Central Committee should reject "dual" subordination in this matter, establish the subordination of local procurators solely to the *central authority*, and allow the procurator to retain the right and duty to challenge the legality of any decision or order passed by local authority with the proviso, however, that he shall have no right to suspend such decisions; he shall only have the right to bring them before the courts.

Written May 20, 1922
Published in *Pravda* No. 91,
April 23, 1925

FIVE YEARS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE PROSPECTS OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

REPORT DELIVERED AT THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, NOVEMBER 13, 1922

Comrades, I am down in the list as the principal reporter, but you will understand that after my long illness I am unable to make a long report. I can only make a few introductory remarks on the most important questions. My subject will be a very limited one. The subject: "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution," is too broad and too large for one speaker to exhaust in a single speech. That is why I shall take only a small part of this subject, namely, the question of the "new economic policy." I have deliberately taken only this small part in order to make you familiar with what is now the most important question, at all events, the most important for me, because I am now working on it.

And so, I shall tell you how we launched the new economic policy, and what results we have achieved with the aid of this policy. If I confine myself to this question I may be able to give you a general survey and a general idea of it.

To begin with the question of how we arrived at the new economic policy I must quote from an article I wrote in 1918.* At the beginning of 1918, in a brief controversy, I touched precisely on the question of the attitude we should adopt towards state capitalism. I then wrote:

> "... State capitalism would be *an advance* on the present state of affairs" (*i.e.*, the state of affairs that existed at that time) "in our Soviet Republic. If state capitalism were established in approximately six months' time, it would be a great achievement and a sure guarantee that within a year Socialism will have gained a permanently firm foothold and will have become invincible in our country."

* *Cf.* "'Left-wing' Childishness and Petty-bourgeois Mentality," *Selected Works*, Vol. VII.—*Ed.*

Of course, this was said at a time when we were more foolish than we are now, but not so foolish as to be unable to examine such questions.

Thus, in 1918, I was of the opinion that considering the economic condition the Soviet Republic was in then, state capitalism was an advance. This sounds very strange, and, perhaps, even absurd, for already at that time our republic was a Socialist republic; at that time, every day, we hurriedly—perhaps too hurriedly—adopted various new economic measures which cannot be described otherwise than as Socialist measures. Nevertheless, I then held the view that compared with the economic condition the Soviet Republic was in then, state capitalism was an advance, and I explained my idea simply by enumerating the main elements of the economic system of Russia. In my opinion these elements were the following: "1) Patriarchal, *i.e.*, the most primitive form of agriculture; 2) small commodity production (this includes the majority of the peasants who trade in grain); 3) private capitalism; 4) state capitalism and 5) Socialism." All these economic elements were present in Russia at that time. I set myself the task of explaining the relation in which these elements stood to each other, and whether one of these non-Socialist elements, namely state capitalism, should not be rated higher than Socialism. I repeat: It seems very strange to everyone that a non-Socialist element should be rated higher than, should be regarded as superior to, Socialism in a republic which declares that it is a Socialist republic. But it will become intelligible if you remember that we did not regard the economic system of Russia as something homogeneous and highly developed; we were well aware of the fact that in Russia we had patriarchal agriculture, *i.e.*, the most primitive form of agriculture, side by side with the Socialist form. What role could state capitalism play under such circumstances?

Then I go on to ask: Which of these elements is the predominant one? Clearly, in a petty-bourgeois environment the petty-bourgeois element predominates. I then stated that the petty-bourgeois element predominated; it was impossible to take a different view. The question I then put to myself—this was during another controversy, which had nothing to do with the present question—was: What is our attitude towards state capitalism? And I replied: Although it is not a Socialist form, state capitalism would be for us, and for Russia, a more favourable form than the existing one. What does that show? It shows that we did not overrate either the rudiments or the principle of Socialist economy, although we had already accomplished the social revolution. On the contrary, already at that time we realized to a certain degree that it would be better if we first arrived at state capitalism and then at Socialism.

I must particularly emphasize this, because I assume that only by taking this as our point of departure can we, firstly, explain what the present economic policy is; and secondly, what important practical conclusions can be drawn from this for the Communist International. I do not want to suggest that we already had a ready-made plan of retreat. That

was not the case. Those brief controversial lines were not by any means a plan of retreat. They did not contain a word about one very important point, *e.g.*, free trade, which is a fundamental element of state capitalism. Nevertheless, they contained the general, indefinite idea of a retreat. I think that we must take note of this not only from the viewpoint of a country whose economic system was, and is to this day, very backward, but also from the viewpoint of the Communist International, and of the advanced West European countries. For example, just now we are engaged in drawing up a program. I, personally, think that the best thing for us to do is to have a general discussion on all the programs, to take the first reading, as it were, get them printed, but not take a final decision now, this year. Why? First of all, of course, because I do not think we have all considered them thoroughly enough. And also because we have given scarcely any thought to the possibility of retreat, and of ensuring this retreat. In view of the fundamental change that has taken place in the world, such as the overthrow of capitalism and the building of Socialism, with all the enormous difficulties accompanying it, we cannot absolutely ignore this question. We must not only know how to act when we are passing to the offensive and are victorious. In revolutionary times this is not so difficult, nor is it so important; at least, it is not the most decisive factor. Moments always occur in times of revolution when the enemy loses his head; and if we make our onslaught upon him at such a moment we may achieve an easy victory. But this is not decisive; for if the enemy possesses sufficient power of endurance, he can rally his forces, and so forth; he can easily provoke us to attack him and then throw us back for many years. That is why I think that the idea that we must prepare for the possibility of retreat is very important, and not only from the theoretical point of view; even from the practical point of view, all the parties which are preparing to pass to the direct onslaught upon capitalism in the near future must now also think of ensuring for themselves the possibility of retreat. I think it will do us no harm to learn this lesson together with all the other lessons of our revolution. On the contrary, it may prove beneficial in many cases.

Having emphasized the fact that already in 1918 we regarded state capitalism as a possible line of retreat, I shall now deal with the results of our new economic policy. I repeat: At that time it was still a very vague idea; but in 1921, after we had passed the most important stage of the civil war—and passed it victoriously—we felt the impact of a grave—I think it was the gravest—internal political crisis in Soviet Russia, which caused discontent among a considerable section of the peasantry, and even of the workers. This was the first and, I hope, the last time in the history of Soviet Russia that large masses of peasants were hostile towards us, although unconsciously, instinctively. What gave rise to this peculiar and, for us, of course, very unpleasant, situation? The fact that we had advanced too far in our economic offensive; the fact that we had not created an adequate base; the fact that the masses sensed what we ourselves were

not yet able consciously to formulate, but what we, soon after, a few weeks later, admitted, namely: that the transition straight to purely Socialist forms, to purely Socialist distribution, was beyond our strength; and that if we were unable to effect a retreat so as to confine ourselves to easier tasks, we would be doomed. The crisis began, I think, in February 1921. In the spring of that year we already decided unanimously—I did not observe any considerable disagreement among us on this question—to adopt the new economic policy. Now, after eighteen months, at the end of 1922, we are able to make certain comparisons. What happened? How have we fared during this period of over eighteen months? What is the result? Has this retreat been of any benefit to us? Has it really saved us, or is the result still indefinite? This is the main question that I put to myself, and I think that this main question is also of first-rate importance for all the Communist Parties; for if the reply were in the negative, we would all be doomed. I think that we can with a clear conscience reply to this question in the affirmative, namely: that the past eighteen months have been favourable, and that they prove absolutely that we have passed our examination.

I shall now try to prove this. To do that I must briefly enumerate all the constituent parts of our economy.

First of all I will deal with our financial system and our famous Russian ruble. I think we can say that the Russian ruble is famous, if only for the reason that the number of these rubles now in circulation exceeds a quadrillion. That's something. It is an astronomical figure. I am quite sure that not even everyone here realizes what this figure signifies. But we do not think that the figure is so very important even from the point of view of economic science, for the noughts can always be struck out. In this art, which is also unimportant from the economic point of view, we have achieved something; and I am sure that with the further progress of events we shall achieve much more. What is really important is the problem of the stabilization of the ruble. We, our best forces, are now grappling with this problem, and we attach decisive importance to it. If we succeed in stabilizing the ruble for a long period, and then permanently, it will prove that we have won. In that case all these astronomical figures, these trillions and quadrillions will not have mattered in the least. We shall then be able to place our economy on a firm basis, and develop it further on a firm basis. On this question I think I can quote you fairly important and decisive data. In 1921, the rate of exchange of the paper ruble remained stable for a period of less than three months. This year, 1922, which has not yet drawn to a close, the rate remained stable for a period of over five months. I think that this proof is sufficient. Of course, if you demand scientific proof that we shall definitely solve this problem, then it is not sufficient; but in general, I do not think it is possible to prove this entirely up to the hilt. The data I have quoted show that from last year, when we introduced the new economic policy, to the present day, we have learned to make prog-

ress. Since we have learned to do this, I am sure we shall learn to achieve further successes on this road, if only we avoid doing anything very foolish. The most important thing, however, is trade, namely, the circulation of commodities, which is essential for us. And since we have successfully grappled with this problem for two years, in spite of the fact that we have been in a state of war (for, as you know, we recaptured Vladivostok only a few weeks ago*), in spite of the fact that only now are we able to proceed with our economic activities in a really systematic way—since we have succeeded in keeping the rate of the paper ruble stable for five months instead of only three months, I think I can say that we have grounds for satisfaction. After all, we are standing alone. We have not received any loans, and are not receiving any now. We have received no assistance from any of the powerful capitalist countries which are organizing their capitalist economy so "brilliantly" that to this day they do not know where they are heading for. By the Versailles Peace they have created a financial system that they themselves cannot make head or tail of. If these great capitalist countries are managing in this way, I think that we who are backward and uneducated may be pleased with the fact that we have grasped the most important thing, *viz.*, the conditions for the stabilization of the ruble. This is proved not by theoretical analysis but by practical experience, which in my opinion is more important than all the theoretical discussions in the world. Practice shows that here we have achieved decisive results, namely, we are beginning to push our economy in the direction of the stabilization of the ruble, which is of supreme importance for trade, for the free circulation of commodities, for the peasants, and for the vast masses of small producers.

Now I come to our social aims. The most important thing, of course, is the peasantry. In 1921 discontent, undoubtedly, prevailed among a vast section of the peasantry. Then came the famine; and this was the severest trial for the peasants. Naturally, all our enemies abroad shouted: "There, that's the result of Socialist economy!" Quite naturally, of course, they said nothing about the fact that actually the famine was the monstrous result of the civil war. All the landlords and capitalists who launched their attack upon us in 1918, tried to make it appear that the famine was the result of Socialist economy. The famine was indeed a great and grave disaster which threatened to nullify the results of all our organizational and revolutionary efforts.

And so, I now ask: After this unprecedented and unexpected disaster, what is the position now, after we have introduced the new economic policy, after we have granted the peasants freedom to trade? The answer is evident to everyone: in the course of one year the peasants have not only overcome the famine, but have paid the tax in kind on such a scale that we

* On October 25, 1922, Vladivostok was cleared of the Whiteguard bands and the Japanese interventionists as the result of a successful offensive conducted by the troops of the Far-Eastern Republic.—*Ed.*

have now received hundreds of millions of poods of grain, and that almost without employing any measures of coercion. Peasant uprisings, which previously, up to 1921, characterized the Russian scene, so to speak, have almost completely disappeared. The peasants are satisfied with their present conditions We can honestly assert that. We think that this evidence is more important than any amount of statistical proof. No one has any doubt about the fact that the peasantry in our country is the decisive factor. And the conditions of the peasantry are such now that we have no reason to fear any movement against us from that side. We say that quite deliberately, without exaggeration. This we have already achieved. The peasantry may be dissatisfied with certain aspects of the work of our authorities; they may complain. This, of course, is possible and inevitable, for our machinery of state and our state administration are still too inefficient to avert this, but at all events serious dissatisfaction with us on the part of the peasantry as a whole is quite out of the question. This was achieved in the course of one year. I think it is a great achievement.

Now I come to our light industry. In industry we must draw a distinction between heavy industry and light industry, because the situation in each is different. As regards light industry, I can honestly say that there is a general revival I shall not go into details. I did not set out to quote a lot of statistics. But this general impression is based on facts; I assure you that it is not based on anything untrue or inexact. We observe a general revival in light industry, and, as a result, a definite improvement in the conditions of the workers in Petrograd and in Moscow. In other districts this is observed to a lesser degree, because heavy industry predominates in those districts, and therefore this must not be generalized. Nevertheless, I repeat, light industry is undoubtedly on the upgrade, and the conditions of the workers in Petrograd and Moscow have undoubtedly improved In the spring of 1921, discontent prevailed among the workers in both cities. This is not the case now We, who watch the conditions and the moods of the workers day after day, are not mistaken on this score.

The third question is that of heavy industry Here I must say that the situation is still grave Some turn for the better occurred in 1921, so that we may hope that the situation will improve in the near future We have already collected part of the necessary funds for this. In capitalist countries a loan of hundreds of millions would be required to improve the situation in heavy industry Without this, improvement would be impossible. The economic history of capitalist countries shows that heavy industry in backward countries can be developed only with the aid of long-term loans of hundreds of millions of dollars, or gold rubles We have not received such loans, and are not receiving any now All that is now being written about concessions and so forth is worth no more than the paper it is written on We have written a great deal about this lately, particularly about the Urquhart concessions I think our concessions policy is a very good one. Nevertheless, we have not yet concluded a tolerable concessions agree-

ment. I ask you not to forget this. Thus, the situation in heavy industry is really a very grave problem for our backward country, for we cannot count on obtaining loans from the wealthy countries. In spite of that, we already observe a marked improvement, and we also see that our trading activity has already brought us in a certain amount of capital. True, it is only a very modest sum as yet; a little over twenty million gold rubles. At any rate, it is a beginning; our trade is providing us with funds which we can employ for the purpose of improving the situation in heavy industry. Be that as it may, at the present moment our heavy industry is still in great difficulties; but I think that we are already in a position to save a little. This we shall do from now onward. We must economize now, though often at the expense of the people. We are now trying to cut down the state budget, to reduce the staffs in our government offices. Later on I shall say a few words about our machinery of state. At all events, we must reduce it; we must economize as much as possible. We are economizing in all things, even in schools. This must be so, because we know that unless we save heavy industry, unless we restore it, we shall not be able to build up any industry; and without heavy industry we shall be doomed as an independent country. This we fully realize.

The salvation of Russia lies not only in a good harvest on the peasant farms—that is not enough; and not only in the good condition of light industry, which provides the peasantry with consumers' goods—this, too, is not enough; we also need *heavy* industry. And in order to put that in good condition, many years of work will be required.

Heavy industry needs state subsidies. If we cannot provide them, then we are doomed as a civilized state—let alone as a Socialist state. In this respect, we have taken a determined step. We have found the funds necessary for putting heavy industry on its feet. True, the sum we have succeeded in obtaining up to now barely exceeds twenty million gold rubles; but at any rate we have this sum, and it is earmarked exclusively for the purpose of reviving our heavy industry.

I think that, on the whole, I have briefly outlined, as I promised, the principal elements of our national economy, and I think that from all this we may draw the conclusion that the new economic policy has already proved beneficial. We already have proof that, as a state, we are able to carry on trade, maintain strong positions in agriculture and industry, and make progress. Practical activity has proved this. I think that this is sufficient for us for the time being. We still have many things to learn, and we realize that we still have to sit down and learn. We have been in power for five years, and during these five years we have been in a state of war. Hence we can say that we have been successful.

Of course, this is because we were backed by the peasantry. It would have been difficult for anyone to have backed us more than the peasantry did. They realized that in the wake of the Whites were the landlords, whom they hate more than anything in the world. That is why the peasantry en-

thusiastically and loyally supported us. It was not difficult to get the peasants to defend us against the Whites. The peasants who had hated war before, did all they possibly could in the war against the Whites, in the civil war against the landlords. But this was not all, because, virtually, the only issue here was whether power was to remain in the hands of the landlords or of the peasants. This was not enough for us. The peasants realized that we captured power for the workers and that our aim was to use this power to establish the Socialist system. Therefore, the most important thing for us was the economic preparations for Socialist economy. We could not do this straight off. We had to approach it in a roundabout way. The state capitalism that we have introduced in our country is of a peculiar form that does not resemble state capitalism as it is usually conceived. We are in command of all the key positions; we own the land; the land belongs to the state. This is very important, although our opponents try to minimize its importance. They are wrong. The fact that the land belongs to the state is extremely important, and it is also of great practical economic importance. This we have achieved, and I must say that all our future activities must develop only within these limits. We have already succeeded in making the peasantry contented and in reviving both industry and trade. I have already said that our state capitalism differs from state capitalism in the literal sense of the term in that the proletarian state not only owns the land, but also all the vital branches of industry. We have leased a certain number of the small and medium plants; but all the rest remains in our hands. As regards trade, I want to emphasize also that we are trying to form mixed companies, that we are already forming them, *i.e.*, companies in which part of the capital is invested by private capitalists, and foreign capitalists at that, and part by the state. Firstly, in this way we shall learn how to trade, and this is what we need. Secondly, we shall always be able to dissolve these companies whenever we deem it necessary, so we run no risk. We shall learn from the private capitalists and look round to see how we can rise to a higher level, and what mistakes we are making. I think I need say no more on this point.

I would like to deal with several minor points. Undoubtedly, we have done a host of foolish things and will do so again. No one can judge and see this better than I.

Why do we do these foolish things? The reason is clear: firstly, because ours is a backward country; secondly, education in our country is at the lowest level; and thirdly, because we are receiving no assistance. Not a single civilized country is helping us. On the contrary, they are all working against us. Fourthly, our machinery of state is to blame. We took over the old machinery of state, and this was our misfortune. Very often this machine operates against us. In 1917, after we captured power, the government officials sabotaged us. This frightened us very much, and we pleaded with them and said: "Please come back." They all came back, but this was our misfortune. We now have a vast army of government employees, but we

lack sufficiently educated forces to exercise real control over them. Actually, it often happens that at the top, where we exercise political power, the machine functions somehow; but down below, where these state officials are in control, they often function in such a way as to counteract our measures. At the top, we have, I don't know how many, but at all events, I think, several thousand, at the outside several tens of thousands, of our own people. Down below, however, there are hundreds of thousands of old officials who came over to us from the tsar and from bourgeois society and who, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, work against us. Nothing can be done here in a short space of time, that is clear. Many years of hard work will be required to improve the machine, to reform it, and to enlist new forces. We are doing this fairly quickly, perhaps too quickly. Soviet schools and Workers' Preparatory Schools have been formed; several hundreds of thousands of young people are studying; they are studying too fast perhaps, but at all events, a start has been made, and I think our labours will bear fruit. If we do not work too hurriedly we shall, in a few years' time, have a large body of young people who will be capable of thoroughly reforming our machinery of state.

I said that we have done a host of foolish things, but I must also say something about our enemies in this respect. If our enemies reproach us and say that Lenin himself admits that the Bolsheviks have done a host of foolish things, I want to reply by saying: Yes, but do you know that the foolish things we have done are entirely different from those you have done? We have only just begun to learn; but we are learning so methodically that we are certain that we shall achieve good results. But when our enemies, *i.e.*, the capitalists and the heroes of the Second International, lay stress on the foolish things we have done, I should like for the purpose of illustration to paraphrase the words of a celebrated Russian author. The illustration is the following: When the Bolsheviks do foolish things, it is like saying: "Twice two are five"; but when their enemies, *i.e.*, the capitalists and the heroes of the Second International, do foolish things, it is like saying: "Twice two are a tallow candle." It is not difficult to prove this. Take, for example the agreement concluded by America, Great Britain, France and Japan with Kolchak. I ask you, are there any more enlightened and more powerful countries in the world than these? But what was the upshot of this agreement? They promised to help Kolchak without calculating, without reflecting, and without circumspection; and it turned out to be a fiasco on a scale which, in my opinion, is difficult for the human mind to grasp.

Or take another example, a closer and more important one, *viz.*, the Versailles Peace. I ask you, what did the "Great" Powers which have "covered themselves with glory" do here? Can they find a way out of this chaos and confusion? I don't think it will be an exaggeration to say that the foolish things we have done are nothing compared with those done by the capitalist countries, by the capitalist world and the Second Interna-

tional put together. That is why I think that the prospects of the world revolution—a subject which I must touch on briefly—are favourable; and given a certain definite condition I think they will even improve. I should like to say a few words about this.

At the Third Congress, in 1921, we adopted a resolution on the organizational structure of the Communist Parties and on the methods and content of their activities. The resolution is an excellent one, but it is almost entirely Russian, that is to say, everything in it is taken from Russian conditions. This is its merit, but it is also its demerit. It is its demerit because I am sure that scarcely a single foreigner can read it. I read the resolution over again before deciding to say this. In the first place, it is too long; it contains fifty or more points. Usually, foreigners are unable to read things of this length. Secondly, even if foreigners do read it, they will not understand it precisely because it is too Russian. Not that it is written in Russian—it has been excellently translated in all languages—but it is thoroughly permeated with the Russian spirit. And thirdly, if by way of an exception, some foreigner does understand it, he cannot carry it out. This is its third defect. I have talked with several foreign delegates, and I hope during the Congress—although I shall not take part in the Congress proceedings; unfortunately, it is impossible for me to do that—to be able to discuss matters in detail with a large number of delegates from different countries. I have the impression that we made a great mistake with this resolution, namely, that we have blocked our own road to further progress. As I have said already, the resolution is excellently drafted; I subscribe to every one of its fifty or more points. But we have not learnt to present our Russian experience to foreigners. All that has been said in the resolution has remained a dead letter. If we do not realize this we shall make no progress. I think that after five years of the Russian revolution the most important thing for all of us, Russian and foreign comrades alike, is to sit down and study. We have only just obtained the opportunity to do this. I do not know how long this opportunity will last. I do not know how long the capitalist powers will permit us to enjoy the opportunity to study in peace. But we must take advantage of every moment of respite from fighting, from war, to study, to start learning from the beginning.

The whole Party and all strata of the population of Russia prove this by their thirst for knowledge. This striving to learn shows that our most important task today is to study and to study hard; and this applies to foreign comrades too. I do not mean that they have to learn to read and write and to understand what they read, as we still have to do. There is a dispute as to whether this appertains to proletarian or to bourgeois culture. I shall leave that an open question. But one thing is certain: we must first of all learn to read and write and to understand what we read. The foreign comrades need not do that. They need something higher: first of all they must learn to understand what we have written about the organ-

izational structure of the Communist Parties, and which they have signed without reading and understanding. This must be their first task. That resolution must be carried out. It cannot be carried out overnight; that is absolutely impossible. The resolution is too Russian; it reflects Russian experience. That is why it is quite unintelligible to foreigners; and they cannot be content with hanging it in a corner like an icon and praying to it. Nothing will be achieved that way. They must digest a good slice of Russian experience. How they will do this I do not know. Perhaps the fascists in Italy, for example, will render us a great service by explaining to the Italians that they are not yet sufficiently enlightened and that their country is not yet ensured against the Black-Hundreds. Perhaps this will be very beneficial. We Russians must also find ways and means of explaining the principles of this resolution to the foreïgners. Unless we do that, it will be absolutely impossible for them to carry it out. I am sure that in this connection we must tell both the Russians and the foreign comrades that the most important thing in the ensuing period is to study. We are studying in the general sense. They, however, must study in the special sense, in order that they may really understand the organization, structure, method and content of revolutionary activity. If they do that, I am sure the prospects of the world revolution will be not only good, but excellent.

Originally published in *The Bulletin of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International*,
(Russian edition) No. 8,
November 16, 1922

NOTES ON THE TASKS OF OUR DELEGATION AT THE HAGUE*

On the question of combating the danger of war in connection with the conference at the Hague, I think that the greatest difficulty lies in overcoming the prejudice that this question is a simple, clear and comparatively easy one.

"We shall retaliate to war by a strike or a revolution"—that is what all the prominent reformist leaders usually say to the working class. And very often the seeming radicalness of the measures proposed satisfies and appeases the workers, co-operators and peasants.

Perhaps the most correct method would be to start with the sharpest refutation of this opinion, to declare that particularly now, after the recent war, only the most foolish or utterly dishonest people can assert that such an answer to the question of combating war is of any use; to declare that it is impossible to "retaliate" to war by a strike, just as it is impossible to "retaliate" to war by revolution in the simple and literal sense of these terms

We must explain to the people that war is hatched in the greatest secrecy, and that the ordinary workers' organizations, even if they call themselves revolutionary organizations, are utterly helpless in the face of a really impending war.

We must explain to the people again and again in the most concrete manner possible, how matters stood in the last war, and why they could not be otherwise

We must take special pains to explain that the question of "defence of the fatherland" must inevitably arise and that the overwhelming majority of the working people will inevitably settle it in favour of their bourgeoisie.

Therefore, first, it is necessary to explain what "defence of the fatherland" means Second, in connection with the latter, it is necessary to explain what "defeatism" means. Lastly, we must explain that the only possible method of combating war is to preserve existing, and to form new,

* The Hague International Peace Congress (December 10 15, 1922) was convened by the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions to discuss the growing danger of war —*Ed*

illegal organizations in which all revolutionaries in the armed forces shall carry on *prolonged* anti-war activities—all this must be brought into the forefront.

Boycott war—this is a silly catchphrase. Communists must join the forces in every war, even the most reactionary.

Examples from, say, pre-war German literature, and *in particular*, the example of the Basle Congress of 1912, should be used as particularly concrete proof that the theoretical admission that war is criminal, that Socialists cannot condone war, etc., turn out to be empty phrases, because there is nothing concrete in them and they do not give the masses a really vivid idea of how war may and will creep up on us. On the other hand, every day the dominant press, in an infinite number of copies, obscures this question and weaves such lies around it that the feeble Socialist press is absolutely impotent against it, the more so that in peace times it propounds fundamentally erroneous views on this point. In all probability, the Communist press in most countries will also disgrace itself.

I think that our delegates at the International Congress of Co-operators and Trade Unionists should distribute their functions among themselves and closely examine all the sophistries that are being advanced at the present time in justification of war.

These sophistries are, perhaps, the principal means by which the bourgeois press rallies the masses on the side of war; and the main reason why we are so impotent in the face of war is either that we do not examine these sophistries beforehand, or still more that we, in the spirit of the Basle Manifesto of 1912, waive them aside with the cheap, boastful and utterly empty phrase that we shall not tolerate war, that we fully understand that war is a crime, etc.

I think that if we have several people at the Hague Conference who are capable of delivering speeches against war in various languages, the most important thing would be to refute the opinion that the delegates at the conference are opponents of war, that they understand that war may and will come upon them at the most unexpected moment, that they to any extent understand what methods should be adopted to combat war, that they are to any extent in a position to adopt reasonable and effective measures to combat war.

Using our recent experience of war to illustrate the point, we must explain what a number of both theoretical and practical questions will arise on the morrow of the declaration of war, and that the vast majority of the men called up for military service will have no opportunity to examine them with anything like clear heads, or in a conscientious and unprejudiced manner.

I think that this question must be explained in extraordinary detail, and in two ways:

First, by relating and analysing what happened during the last war and telling all those who are present that they are ignorant of this, or pretend

that they know about it, but actually shut their eyes to what is the very pivot of the question which must be understood if any real efforts are to be made to combat war On this point I think it is necessary to examine all the opinions and shades of opinion that arose among Russian Socialists concerning the last war We must show that these shades of opinion did not arise accidentally, but out of the very nature of modern wars We must show how important it is to analyse these opinions, to ascertain why they inevitably arise and to appreciate their decisive significance in the matter of combating war, for without such an analysis, it is utterly impossible to make any preparations for the event of war, or even to take an intelligent stand on it

Secondly, we must take the present conflicts, even the most insignificant, to illustrate the fact that war may break out any day as a consequence of the dispute between Great Britain and France over some point of the treaty with Turkey, or between America and Japan over some trivial disagreement on some Pacific question, or between any of the big powers over colonies, tariffs, or general commercial policy, etc , etc It seems to me that if there is any doubt about being able at The Hague to say all we want to say against war with the utmost freedom, it will be necessary to consider various stratagems that will enable us to say at least what is most important and to publish what could not be said in pamphlet form We must take the risk of our speaker being pulled up by the chairman

I think that for the same purpose the delegation should not only consist of speakers who are able, and whose duty it shall be, to make speeches against war as a whole, i e , to enlarge on all the main arguments and all the conditions for combating war, but also of people who know all the three principal foreign languages, whose business it shall be to enter into conversation with the delegates and to ascertain how far they understand the main arguments, which arguments should be advanced, which examples should be quoted

Perhaps on a number of questions the mere quoting of practical examples of the last war will be sufficient to produce serious effect Perhaps on a number of other questions serious effect can be produced only by explaining the conflicts that exist today between the various countries and how likely they are to develop into armed collisions

Apropos of the question of combating war, I remember that a number of declarations have been made by our Communist deputies, in as well as outside parliament, which contain monstrously incorrect and monstrously thoughtless statements about this subject I think these declarations, particularly if they have been made since the war, must be subjected to determined and ruthless criticism, and the name of each person who made them should be mentioned Opinion concerning these speakers may be expressed in the mildest terms, particularly if circumstances require it, but not a single case of this kind should be hushed up, for thoughtlessness on this question is an evil that outweighs all others and cannot be treated lightly

A number of decisions have been adopted by labour congresses which are unpardonably foolish and thoughtless.

All material should be immediately collected, and all the separate parts and particles of the subject, and the whole "strategy" to be pursued at the congress, should be thoroughly discussed.

On such a question, not only a mistake, but even lack of thoroughness on our part on any essential matter, will be unpardonable.

December 4, 1922

First published in *Pravda* No. 96,
April 26, 1924

PAGES FROM A DIARY

The report on literacy among the population of Russia based on the census of 1920, published the other day (*Literacy in Russia*, issued by the Central Statistical Board, Public Education Section, Moscow, 1922) is a very important publication

Below I quote a table which I have taken from this report that illustrates the state of literacy among the population of Russia in 1897 and 1920

	Literates per thousand males		Literates per thousand females		Literates per thousand both sexes	
	1897	1920	1897	1920	1897	1920
1) European Russia	326	422	136	22o	229	330
2) North Caucasus	241	357	o6	21o	150	281
3) Siberia (Western)	170	307	46	134	108	218
Total	318	409	131	244	223	319

While we are gassing about proletarian culture and the relation in which it stands to bourgeois culture, facts and figures reveal that we are in a bad way even as regards bourgeois culture As might have been expected, it appears that we are still very backward as regards general literacy, and that even compared with tsarist times (1897) our progress has been far too slow This should serve as a severe warning and reproach to those who are soaring in the empyrean heights of "proletarian culture " It shows what a vast amount of spadework we still have to do to reach the standard of an ordinary West European civilized state It also shows what a vast amount of work we have to do today to achieve anything like a real cultural standard on the basis of our proletarian gains

But we must not confine ourselves to this incontrovertible, but too theoretical, proposition The very next time we revise our quarterly budget we must take this matter up in a practical manner In the first place, of course, we must cut down the expenditure of government departments other than the People's Commissariat for Education, and the sums thus released

must be assigned for the latter's needs. Moreover, in a year like the present, when we are fairly well supplied, we must not be chary about increasing the bread ration for school teachers.

Generally speaking, it cannot be said that the work now being done in the field of public education is too limited. Quite a lot is being done to shift the old teachers out of their old rut, to enlist them in the work of solving new problems, to rouse their interest in new methods of education, and in problems like religion.

But we are *not* doing the main thing. We are not concerning ourselves—or not concerning ourselves enough—with the problem of raising the village school teacher to the level that is absolutely essential if we desire to have any culture at all, proletarian or even bourgeois. We must bear in mind the semi-Asiatic ignorance in which we are still submerged, and from which we shall not extricate ourselves without strenuous effort—although we have the opportunity to extricate ourselves, for nowhere are the masses of the people so interested in real culture as they are in our country; nowhere are the problems of culture so profoundly and thoroughly discussed as they are in our country; in no other country is state power in the hands of the working class, which, in the main, is fully aware of its deficiencies, I shall not say in culture, but in literacy; nowhere is the working class so ready to make, and actually making, such sacrifices for the purpose of improving its position in this respect as it is in our country.

Too little, infinitely too little, is still being done in our country to compile our state budget in such a way as to satisfy primarily the requirements of elementary education. We find inflated staffs even in our People's Commissariat for Education, for example, in the State Publishing Department, and we forget that rather than provide for the running of publishing houses the state's first concern should be to teach the people to read, to create a reading public and thus create a wider political field for the publication of books in future Russia. Owing to the old (bad) habit of devoting much more time and effort to technical questions, such as the publishing of books, than to the general, political question of literacy among the people.

If we look into the Chief Vocational Education Board I am sure that here, too, we shall find much that is superfluous and inflated by departmental interests, much that is ill-suited to the requirements of broad, popular education. Not every thing that we find in the Chief Vocational Education Board can be justified by the legitimate desire first of all to improve and give a practical direction to the education of our industrial youth. If we examine the staff of the Chief Vocational Education Board from this angle we shall find that it is largely inflated and fictitious and should be reduced. The proletarian-peasant state can and should introduce many more economies so as to obtain the funds with which to promote literacy among the people. All institutions which are either in the nature of semi-aristocratic hobbies, or such as we can dispense with for a long time to come con-

sidering the state of literacy among the people as revealed by the statistics, should be closed

Our village school teachers should be raised to a standard never achieved and unachievable in bourgeois society. This is a truism that requires no proof We must strive to achieve this by working steadily, systematically and persistently to raise the teachers to a higher spiritual level, to train them thoroughly for their really high calling, and, mainly, mainly and mainly to improve their condition materially

We must systematically increase our efforts to organize the village school teachers so as to transform them from the bulwark of the bourgeois system that they still are in all capitalist countries without exception, into the bulwark of the Soviet system, so that we may be able through their agency to win the peasantry away from alliance with the bourgeoisie and to bring them into alliance with the proletariat

I want briefly to emphasize the special importance of systematic visits to the rural districts, which, incidentally, are already being practised and should be systematically developed We should not stint money—which we very often waste on the machinery of state which almost entirely belongs to the past historical epoch—on measures like arranging visits to the rural districts

For the speech I was to have delivered at the Congress of Soviets in December 1922 I collected material on the patronage undertaken by urban workers over the inhabitants of the rural districts Part of this material was obtained for me by Comrade Khodorovsky, and since I have been unable to deal with it and give it publicity at the Congress I ask comrades to examine this question now

This is a fundamental political question connected with the relations between town and country, a matter of decisive importance for our revolution While the bourgeois state systematically exerts all efforts to dope the urban workers, and utilizes all the literature published at state expense, and at the expense of the tsarist and bourgeois parties for this purpose, we can and should utilize our political power for the purpose of converting the urban worker into an effective vehicle of Communist ideas among the rural proletariat

I said "Communist," but I hasten to make a reservation for fear of causing misunderstanding, or of being understood too literally Under no circumstances must this be understood to mean that we must immediately propagate pure and strictly Communist ideas in the rural districts As long as our rural districts still lack the material basis for Communism, it will be harmful, in fact, one may say, fatal for Communism to do so

No We must start by establishing intercourse between town and country without the preconceived aim of implanting Communism in the rural districts This aim cannot be achieved at the present time It is inopportune, and to attempt to pursue it at the present time would be harmful instead of useful to the cause

But it is our duty to establish intercourse between the workers in the towns and the workers in the country, to establish between them the form of comradeship that can easily be created. This is one of the fundamental tasks of the working class which is now in power. To achieve this we must form a number of organizations (Party, trade union and private) of factory workers which could systematically devote themselves to the task of assisting the cultural development of the rural districts.

Is it possible to "attach" all the urban groups to all the village groups, so that every working-class group may take advantage of every opportunity to serve the cultural needs of the village group it is attached to? Or is it possible to find other forms of contacts? I put these questions in order to draw comrades' attention to the problem, to point to the already available experience of Western Siberia (to which Comrade Khodorovsky drew my attention) and to present this gigantic, world-historical, cultural problem in its full scope.

Except for what is provided for in the official budget, or done through official channels, we are doing almost nothing for the rural districts. True, in this country cultural relations between town and country are automatically assuming and must inevitably assume, a different character. Under capitalism the town introduced political, economic, moral, physical, etc., corruption in the countryside. Our towns are automatically beginning to introduce the antithesis of this in the countryside. But the whole trouble is that it is all going on automatically, spontaneously. The results would be increased (and later increased a hundredfold) if it were done consciously, methodically and systematically.

We shall begin to make progress (and advance a hundred times more quickly) only when we study the question, when we form all sorts of workers' organizations—doing everything to prevent them from becoming bureaucratic—to take up this question, discuss it and get things done.

January 2, 1923

Pravda No. 2,
January 4, 1923

of assistance to give a bonus to peasants who take part in co operative trade, but the whole point is to verify the nature of this participation, to verify the intelligence behind it, to verify its quality. Strictly speaking, when a co operator goes to a village and opens a co operative store, the people take no part in this whatever, but at the same time, guided by their own interests, the people will hasten to try to take part in it.

There is another aspect to this question We have not very much more to do from the point of view of the "civilized" (primarily, literate) European to induce absolutely everyone to take not a passive, but an active part in co operative operations Strictly speaking, there is *"only"* one more thing we have to do, and that is, to make our people so "civilized" as to understand all the advantages of having them all take part in the work of the co operatives, and to organize this participation *"Only"* this. We need no other cunning devices to enable us to pass to Socialism But to achieve this "only," a complete revolution is needed, the entire people must go through a whole period of cultural development Therefore, our rule must be as little philosophizing and as few acrobatics as possible In this respect the NEP is an advance, in that it is suited to the level of the ordinary peasant, in that it does not demand anything higher of him But it will take a whole historical epoch to get the whole population to take part in the work of the co operatives through the NEP At best we can achieve this in one or two decades Nevertheless, this will be a special historical epoch, and without this historical epoch, without universal literacy, without a proper degree of efficiency, without sufficiently training the population to acquire the habit of reading books, and without the material basis for this, without certain safeguards against, say, bad harvests, famine, etc , we shall fail to achieve our object The whole thing now is to learn to combine the wide revolutionary range of action, the revolutionary enthusiasm which we have displayed and displayed sufficiently and crowned with complete success—to learn, to combine this with (I am almost ready to say) the ability to be an efficient and capable merchant, which is sufficient to be a good co operator. By ability to be a merchant I mean the ability to be a cultured merchant. Let those Russians, or plain peasants, who imagine that since they trade they can be good merchants, get this well into their heads It does not follow at all They trade, but this is far from being cultured merchants They are now trading in an Asiatic manner, but to be a merchant one must be able to trade in a European manner A whole epoch separates them from that position

In conclusion a number of economic, financial and banking privileges must be granted to the co operatives—this is the way our Socialist state must promote the new principle on which the population must be organized But this is only the general outline of the task, it does not define, depict in detail the entire content of the practical tasks, *i e* , we must ascertain what form of "bonus" we should give for organizing the co operatives (and the terms on which we should give it), the form of bonus

by which we shall sufficiently assist the co-operatives, the form of bonus by means of which we shall obtain the civilized co-operator. And a system of civilized co-operators under the social ownership of the means of production, with the class victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, is Socialism.

January 4, 1923

II

Whenever I wrote about the new economic policy I always quoted the article on state capitalism which I wrote in 1918.* More than once this has roused doubts in the minds of certain young comrades. But their doubts arose mainly in connection with abstract political questions.

It seemed to them that the term state capitalism cannot be applied to the system under which the means of production are owned by the working class, and in which the working class holds political power. They failed to observe, however, that I used the term "state capitalism," *first*, in order to establish the historical connection between our present position and the position I held in my controversy with the so-called Left Communists; and already at that time I argued that state capitalism would be superior to the existing system of economy. It was important for me to show the continuity between ordinary state capitalism and the unusual, even very unusual, state capitalism to which I referred in introducing the reader to the new economic policy. *Secondly*, I always attached importance to the practical aim. And the practical aim of our new economic policy was to grant concessions. Undoubtedly, under the conditions prevailing in our country, concessions would have been a pure type of state capitalism. That is how I conceived the argument about state capitalism.

But there is another aspect of the matter for which we may need state capitalism, or at least, something in juxtaposition with it. This raises the question of co-operation.

There is no doubt that under the capitalist state the co-operatives are collective capitalist institutions. Nor is there any doubt that under our present economic conditions, when we combine private capitalist enterprises—but situated on public land and controlled by the state power which is in the hands of the working class—with enterprises of a consistently Socialist type (the means of production, the land on which the enterprises are situated, and the enterprises as a whole, belonging to the state), the question of a third type of enterprise arises, which formerly was not regarded as an independent type differing in principle from the others, *viz.*, co-operative enterprises. Under private capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from capitalist enterprises as collective

* "'Left-wing' Childishness and Petty-bourgeois Mentality," *Selected Works*, Vol. VII.—*Ed.*

enterprises differ from private enterprises. Under state capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from state capitalist enterprises, firstly, in that they are private enterprises, and secondly, in that they are collective enterprises. Under our present system, co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but they do not differ from Socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the means of production belong to the state, *i.e.*, the working class.

This circumstance is not taken into consideration sufficiently when co-operation is discussed. It is forgotten that owing to the special features of our state system, our co-operatives acquire an altogether exceptional significance. If we exclude concessions, which, incidentally, we have not granted on any considerable scale, co-operation, under our conditions, very often entirely coincides with Socialism.

I shall explain my idea. Why were the plans of the old co-operators, from Robert Owen onwards, fantastic? Because they dreamt of peacefully transforming present-day society into Socialism without taking into account fundamental questions like that of the class struggle, of the working class capturing political power, of overthrowing the rule of the exploiting class. That is why we are right in regarding this "co-operative" Socialism as being entirely fantastic, and the dream of being able to transform the class enemies into class colleagues and the class struggle into class peace (so-called civil peace), merely by organizing the population in co-operative societies, as something romantic and even banal.

Undoubtedly we were right from the point of view of the fundamental task of the present day, for Socialism cannot be established without the class struggle for political power in the state.

But see how things have changed now that political power is in the hands of the working class, now that the political power of the exploiters is overthrown, and all the means of production (except those which the workers' state voluntarily loans to the exploiters for a certain time and on definite terms in the form of concessions) are owned by the working class.

Now we are right in saying that for us, the mere growth of co-operation (with the "slight" exception mentioned above) is identical with the growth of Socialism, and at the same time we must admit that a radical change has taken place in our point of view concerning Socialism. This radical change lies in that formerly we placed, and had to place, the main weight of emphasis on the political struggle, on revolution, on winning power, etc. Now we have to shift the weight of emphasis to peaceful, organizational, "cultural" work. I would be prepared to say that the weight of emphasis should be placed on educational work were it not for our international relations, were it not for the fact that we have to fight for our position on a world scale. If we leave that aside, however, and confine ourselves entirely to internal, economic relations, the weight of emphasis in our work is certainly shifted to educational work.

Two main tasks confront us which constitute the epoch: the first is to reorganize our machinery of state, which is utterly useless, and which we took over in its entirety from the preceding epoch; during the past five years of struggle we did not, and could not, make any serious changes in it. The second is to conduct educational work among the peasants. And the economic object of this educational work among the peasants is to organize them in co-operative societies. If the whole of the peasantry were organized in co-operatives, we would be standing firmly with both feet on the soil of Socialism. But the organization of the entire peasantry in co-operative societies presupposes such a standard of culture among the peasants (precisely among the peasants as the overwhelming majority of the population) that this cannot be achieved without a complete cultural revolution.

Our opponents have told us more than once that we are undertaking the rash task of implanting Socialism in an insufficiently cultured country. But they were misled by the fact that we did not start from the end that was assumed by theory (the theory that all sorts of pedants subscribe to), and that in our country the political and social revolution preceded the cultural revolution, the cultural revolution which now confronts us.

This cultural revolution would be sufficient to transform this country into a completely Socialist country; but it bristles with immense difficulties of a purely educational (for we are illiterate) and material character (for to be cultured we must achieve a certain level in the development of the material means of production, we must have some material base).

January 6, 1923

Published in *Pravda* Nos. 115 and 116,
May 26 and 27, 1923

OUR REVOLUTION

Apropos of the Notes of N Sukhanov

1

During the past few days I have been glancing through Sukhanov's *Notes on the Revolution* What strikes me particularly is the pedantry of all our petty-bourgeois democrats, as well as of all the heroes of the Second International Apart from the fact that they are all extraordinarily fainthearted, and that even the best of them fortify themselves with reservations when it comes to the minutest deviation from the German model—apart from this characteristic, which is common to all petty bourgeois democrats and has been abundantly manifested during the whole course of the revolution, what strikes me is their slavish imitation of the past

They all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic They have completely failed to understand the decisive feature of Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. They have absolutely failed to understand Marx's plain statement that in times of revolution the utmost flexibility is demanded. For instance, they have failed to understand, or even to notice, the statement Marx made in one of his letters—I think it was in 1856—expressing the hope that a peasant war in Germany, which might create a revolutionary situation, would combine with the working class movement—they evade even that plain statement and prowl around it like a cat around a bowl of hot porridge.

Their whole conduct proves them to be cowardly reformists, afraid to take the smallest step away from the bourgeoisie, let alone break with it, and at the same time they try to mask their cowardice by the wildest rhetoric and braggadoccio But even from the purely theoretical point of view, what strikes one in the case of all of them is their utter failure to grasp the following piece of Marxian reasoning Up to now they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe follow

a definite path of development, and they cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutandis*, only with certain modifications (quite insignificant from the standpoint of world history).

Firstly—the revolution that broke out in connection with the first imperialist World War. That revolution was bound to reveal new features, or variations, called forth by the war; for such a war and such a situation had never occurred in the world before. We find that since the war the bourgeoisie of the wealthiest countries have been unable to this day to restore "normal" bourgeois relations. Yet our reformists, petty bourgeois who pretend to be revolutionaries, believed, and still believe that normal bourgeois relations are the limit (thus far and no further shalt thou go). And even their conception of the "normal" is utterly commonplace and narrow.

Secondly, they are complete strangers to the idea that, although the development of world history as a whole follows general laws, this does not in the least preclude, but, on the contrary, presupposes the possibility that certain periods of development may display peculiar features in form or in order of development. For instance, it does not even occur to them that Russia, standing as she does on the borderline between the civilized countries and the countries which this war had for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilization, that is, all the Oriental, non-European countries, therefore could, and was indeed bound to reveal certain peculiar features which, while, of course, in keeping with the general line of world development, distinguish her revolution from all previous revolutions in West European countries, and which introduce certain novel features in passing to the Oriental countries.

Infinitely commonplace, for instance, is the argument they learned by rote during the development of West European Social-Democracy, that we are not yet ripe for Socialism; that, as certain of the "learned" gentlemen among them express it, we lack the objective economic premises for Socialism in our country. It never occurs to any of them to ask: Could not a nation that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war, and which believed that its position was hopeless, plunge into a struggle that offered even a slight chance of winning conditions for the further development of its civilization, even if those conditions were somewhat out of the ordinary?

"Russia has not attained the level of development of productive forces that makes Socialism possible." The heroes of the Second International, including, of course, Sukhanov, are as proud of this proposition as a child with a new toy. They keep repeating this incontrovertible proposition over and over again in a thousand different keys and imagine that it is the decisive criterion of our revolution.

But what if the peculiar situation drew Russia into the world impe-

rialist war in which every more or less influential West European country was involved, what if the peculiar situation brought her development to the verge of the revolutions that were maturing, and had partly already begun in the East at a time when conditions enabled us to combine the "peasant war" with the working class movement, which no less a "Marxist" than Marx himself, in 1856, suggested as a possible prospect for Prussia?

What if the complete hopelessness of the situation, by stimulating the efforts of the workers and peasants tenfold, held out the prospect of our being able to create the fundamental requisites of civilization in a different way from that of the West European countries? Has that altered the general course of development of world history? Has that altered the fundamental relations between the basic classes of all the countries that are, or have been, drawn into the general course of world history?

If a definite level of culture is required for the creation of Socialism (although nobody can tell what that definite "level of culture" is), why cannot we begin by creating the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way and *then*, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?

January 16, 1923

2

You say that civilization is necessary for the creation of Socialism Very good But why could we not begin creating such prerequisites of civilization in our country by expelling the Russian landlords and capitalists and start moving towards Socialism after that? Where, in what books, have you read that such variations of the customary historical order of events are impermissible, or impossible?

I remember that Napoleon once wrote *On s engage et puis on voit.* Rendered freely this means One must first plunge into a big battle and then see what happens Well, we first plunged into a big battle in October 1917, and later we saw the details of development (from the stand point of world history they were only certain details, of course) such as the Brest Litovsk Peace, the new economic policy, and so forth And now there can be no doubt that, in the main, we have been victorious

It never occurs to our Sukhanovs, not to speak of the Social Democrats who are still more to the Right, that if it were not for this, revolutions could not be made at all It never occurs to our European philistines that subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries, which possess far larger

populations, and whose social conditions reveal far greater diversity, will undoubtedly display even more peculiar features than the Russian revolution.

It need hardly be said that a textbook written on Kautskyan lines was a useful thing in its day. But it is really high time to abandon the idea that this textbook foresaw all forms of development of subsequent world history. It is high time to say that those who think so are simply fools.

January 17, 1923

Published in *Pravda* No. 117,
May 30, 1923

HOW WE SHOULD REORGANIZE THE WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' INSPECTION

A PROPOSAL TO THE TWELFTH PARTY CONGRESS*

Undoubtedly, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection presents an enormous difficulty for us, and so far no means of removing this difficulty has been devised I think that the comrades who in trying to devise a means of removing the difficulty deny that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is useful and necessary, are wrong On the other hand, I do not deny that the problem presented by our machinery of state and the task of improving it are extremely difficult, that no solution has been found yet, and that the problem is an extremely urgent one

With the exception of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, our machinery of state is very largely a survival of the past, and has least of all undergone serious change It has only been slightly touched up on the surface, but in all other respects it is a typical relic of the old state machine To discover a method of really renovating it I think we must turn to our experience of the Civil War

How did we act in the most critical moments of the Civil War?

We concentrated our best Party forces in the Red Army, we mobilized the best of our workers, we sought for new forces at the tap root of our dictatorship

I am convinced that we must go to the same source to find the means of reorganizing the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection I propose that our Twelfth Party Congress should adopt the following plan of reorganization which is largely a proposal to enlarge our Central Control Commission

The plenum of our Central Committee is already revealing a tendency to develop into something resembling a superior Party conference It meets on the average, not more than once in two months, while the current work of the Central Committee is, as we know, conducted by our Political Bureau, by our Organization Bureau, our Secretariat, and so forth I think

* Lenin's proposal served as a basis for the decision adopted by the Twelfth Party Congress on the reorganization of the Central Control Commission and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection —*Ed*

we ought to follow the road we have thus taken to the end and definitely transform the plenum of the Central Committee into a superior Party conference which shall meet once in two months, jointly with the Central Control Commission. The Central Control Commission should be amalgamated with the main body of the reorganized Workers' and Peasants' Inspection on the following lines.

I propose that the Congress should elect from seventy-five to one hundred additional members of the Central Control Commission. The candidates should be workers and peasants and should submit to the same Party tests as ordinary members of the Central Committee are subjected to, for they are to enjoy the same rights as the members of the Central Committee.

On the other hand, the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should be reduced to three or four hundred. These must be put to a strict test as regards their conscientiousness and knowledge of our machinery of state, and also to a special test as regards their knowledge of the principles of the scientific organization of labour in general, and of administrative work, office work, and so forth, in particular.

In my opinion, the amalgamation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with the Central Control Commission will be beneficial to both institutions. On the one hand, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will thus achieve such high prestige that it will certainly not be inferior to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. On the other hand, our Central Committee, together with the Central Control Commission, will definitely take the road towards becoming a superior Party conference, which in fact it has already started on, and on which it should proceed to the end so as to be able to fulfil its functions properly in two respects: in respect to *its own* methodical, expedient and systematic organization and work, and in respect to maintaining contacts with the really broad masses through the medium of the best of our workers and peasants.

I foresee an objection that, directly or indirectly, may come from those circles that are making our machinery of state obsolete, *i.e.*, from those who urge that its present utterly impossible, indecently pre-revolutionary form be preserved (incidentally, we now have an opportunity which rarely occurs in history of ascertaining the period necessary for bringing about radical social changes; we now see clearly *what* can be done in five years, and what requires much more time).

The objection I foresee is that the change I propose will lead to chaos; that the members of the Central Control Commission will wander around all the institutions, not knowing where, why or to whom to apply on any particular question; that they will cause disorganization everywhere, distract employees from their current work, etc., etc.

I think that the malicious source of this objection is so obvious that it need not be replied to. It goes without saying that the presidium of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and his collegium (and also, in the proper cases, the

BETTER FEWER, BUT BETTER*

On the question of improving our machinery of state, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should not, in my opinion, strive after quantity, and should not hurry We have been able to devote so little thought and attention to the quality of our machinery of state up to now that it would be quite legitimate if we took special care now to secure its thorough organization and concentrated in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a staff of workers really abreast of the times, *i e* , in no way inferior to the best West European standards. For a Socialist republic this condition is really too modest, of course, but our experience of the first five years has fairly crammed our heads with disbelief and scepticism These qualities assert themselves involuntarily when, for example, we hear people dilating at too great length and too flippantly on "proletarian" culture We would be satisfied with real bourgeois culture for a start, and we would be glad, for a start, to be able to dispense with the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture, *i e* , bureaucratic or serf culture, etc In matters of culture, haste and sweeping measures are the worst possible things Many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads.

Thus, as regards our machinery of state we should now draw the conclusion from our past experience that it would be better to proceed more slowly

The situation as regards our machinery of state is so deplorable, not to say disgusting, that we must first of all think very carefully how to eliminate its defects, bearing in mind that the roots of these defects lie in the past, which, although it has been overturned, has not yet been overcome, does not yet belong to the culture of the dim and distant past I say culture deliberately, because in these matters we can regard as achievements only what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits We can say that what is good in the social system of our country has not been properly studied, understood, felt, it has been hastily grasped at, it has not been tested, tried by experience, made durable, etc Of course, it could not be otherwise in a revolutionary epoch, when development proceeded at

* This article is the last that Lenin wrote —*Ed*

such breakneck speed that we passed from tsarism to the Soviet system in a matter of five years.

We must come to our senses in time. We must be extremely sceptical of too rapid progress, of boastfulness, etc. We must think of testing the steps forward which we proclaim to the world every hour, which we take every minute, and which, later on we find, every second, to be flimsy, superficial and not understood. Worst of all would be haste. Worst of all would be to rest on the assumption that we know anything, or on the assumption that we possess to any degree the elements necessary for building a really new state machine that would really deserve to be called Socialist, Soviet, etc.

No, the machine of this kind, and even the elements of it that we do possess, are ridiculously small; we must remember that we must not stint time on building this machine, and that it will take many, many years to build.

What elements have we for building this machine? Only two. First, the workers who are absorbed in the struggle for Socialism. These elements are not sufficiently educated. They would like to build a better machine for us, but they do not know how. They cannot build one. They have not yet developed the culture which is required for this; and it is precisely culture that is required. Here nothing will be achieved by doing things in a rush, by assault, by being smart or vigorous, or by any other of the best human qualities in general. Secondly, we have the element of knowledge, education and training, but to a ridiculously low degree compared with all other countries.

Here, too, we must not forget that we are too prone to compensate (or imagine that we can compensate) our lack of knowledge by zeal, haste, etc.

To rebuild our machinery of state we must at all cost set out, first, to learn, second, to learn, and third, to learn, and then to test what we have learnt, so that what we have learnt shall not remain a dead letter, or a fashionable catchphrase (this often happens among us, and it is no use concealing it); so that what we have learnt may become part of our very beings, so that it may actually and fully become a constituent element of our social life. In short, we must not put the demands that are put by the bourgeoisie of Western Europe, but such as are fit and proper for a country which has set out to become a Socialist country.

The conclusions to be drawn from the above are the following: we must make the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, our instrument for improving our machinery of state, a really exemplary institution.

In order that it may reach the necessary high level we must follow the rule: "Measure your cloth seven times before you cut."

For this purpose, we must utilize the very best of what there is in our social system, and utilize it with the greatest caution, thoughtfulness and knowledge to build up the new People's Commissariat.

For this purpose, the best elements in our social system—such as first-

ly, the advanced workers, and secondly, the really enlightened elements, for whom we can vouch that they will not take the word for the deed, and will not utter a single word that goes against their conscience—must not flinch before any difficulties, must not shrink from any struggle in order to achieve the object they have seriously set themselves.

We have been bustling for five years trying to improve our state apparatus, but it has been mere bustle; and these five years have proved that bustle is useless, even futile, even harmful. This bustle created the impression that we were doing something; as a matter of fact, it only clogged up our institutions and our brains.

It is high time things were changed.

We must follow the rule: "Little, but good." We must follow the rule: "Better get a good staff in two or even three years, than work in haste without hope of getting any at all."

I know that it will be hard to keep to this rule and apply it under our conditions. I know that the opposite rule will force its way through a thousand loopholes. I know that enormous resistance will have to be offered, that devilish persistence will have to be displayed, that in the first few years, at least, the work in this field will be hellishly hard. Nevertheless, I am convinced that only by such effort shall we be able to achieve our aim, and that only by achieving this aim shall we create a republic that is really worthy of the name of Soviet, Socialist, etc.

Probably many readers thought that the figures I quoted by way of illustration in my first article* were too small. I am sure that many calculations may be made to prove that they are. But I think that we must put one thing above all such and other calculations, *viz.*, our desire to obtain really exemplary quality.

I think it is high time we made a thorough study of our machinery of state, to study it in real earnest, and the worst feature of this will be haste. That is why I would utter a strong warning against increasing those figures. In my opinion, we should, on the contrary, be sparing with figures. Let us say frankly that the People's Commissariat for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not enjoy the slightest prestige. Everybody knows that a more badly organized institution than our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not exist, and that under present conditions nothing can be expected from this People's Commissariat. We must have this firmly fixed in our minds if we really want to set out to create within a few years an institution that will, firstly, be an exemplary institution, secondly, win everybody's absolute confidence, and, thirdly, prove to all and sundry that we have really justified the work of such a high institution as the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, we must utterly and irrevocably reject all general standards for office staffs. We must make a particularly careful selection of the employees of the Work-

---

* *Cf.* preceding article.—*Ed.*

ers' and Peasants' Inspection and put them to the strictest test. Indeed, what is the use of establishing a People's Commissariat which carries on anyhow, which does not enjoy the slightest confidence, and whose word carries scarcely any weight? I think that our main object in launching the work of reconstruction we now have in mind is to change all this.

The workers whom we are enlisting as members of the Central Control Commission must be irreproachable Communists, and I think that a great deal has yet to be done to teach them the methods and objects of their work. Furthermore, to assist in this work there must be a definite number of secretaries, who must be put to a triple test before they are allowed to assume their functions. Lastly, the officials whom in exceptional cases we shall accept forthwith as employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must conform to the following requirements.

First, they must be recommended by several Communists.

Second, they must pass an examination in knowledge of the ramifications of our machinery of state.

Third, they must pass an examination in the theory and principles on which our state machinery is built, of the principles of the art of administration, of office routine, etc.

Fourth, they must work in such close harmony with the members of the Central Control Commission and with their own Secretariat that we can vouch for the work of this body as a whole.

I know that these requirements will call for extraordinarily great efforts, and I am afraid that the majority of the "practical" workers in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will say that they are impossible, or will scoff at them. But I ask any one of the present chiefs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or anyone who has any connection with that body: Can he conscientiously tell me what the practical purpose is of a People's Commissariat like the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection? I think this question will help him to acquire a sense of proportion. Either it is not worth while undertaking another of the numerous reorganizations that we have had, and therefore, we must give up the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection as hopeless; or we must really set to work, by slow, difficult and unusual methods, and by testing these methods over and over again, to create something really exemplary, something that will win the respect of all and sundry for its merits, and not only because of its rank and title.

If we cannot arm ourselves with patience, if we are not prepared to devote several years to this task, we had better not start on it at all.

In my opinion we ought to select the smallest possible number of the highest institutes of labour, etc., which we have formed so hastily, see whether they are organized properly, and allow them to continue to function only if they maintain the high level of modern science and give us all its guarantees. If we do that it will not be utopian to hope that within a few years we shall have an institution that will properly perform its

functions, *viz.*, with the backing and confidence of the working class, of the Russian Communist Party, and of the whole mass of the population of our Republic, to work systematically and steadily to improve our machinery of state.

The preparatory work for this can be started at once. If the People's Commissariat for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection accepted the present plan of reorganization it could take preparatory steps at once and then work systematically until the task is completed, without haste, and not hesitating to alter what has been done if that is necessary.

Any half-hearted solution would be extremely harmful in this case. Any standard size for the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection that is based on any other consideration would, in fact, be based on the old bureaucratic considerations, on old prejudices, on what is already condemned, what is universally ridiculed, etc.

Virtually, the question stands as follows:

Either we prove now that we have really learnt something about state construction (we ought to have learnt something in five years), or we prove that we have not matured for that sufficiently. If the latter is the case, we had better not start on the task.

I think that with the men we have at our disposal it will not be immodest to assume that we have learnt enough to be able systematically to rebuild at least one People's Commissariat. True, this People's Commissariat will have to be the model for our entire state machine.

We ought at once to announce a competition for compiling two or more textbooks on the organization of labour in general, and on the work of administration in particular. We can take as a basis the book already published by Ermansky, although it should be said in parenthesis that the latter obviously sympathizes with Menshevism and is unfit to compile textbooks suitable for the Soviet government. We can also take as a basis the recent book by Kerzhentsev, and some of the other textbooks available may be useful.

We ought to send several qualified and conscientious people to Germany, or to England, to collect literature and to study this question. I mention England in case it is found impossible to send people to America or Canada.

We ought to appoint a commission to draw up the preliminary program of examinations for candidates for employment in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; ditto for candidates for the Central Control Commission.

These and similar measures will not, of course, cause any difficulties for the People's Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or for his Collegium, or for the presidium of the Central Control Commission.

Simultaneously, a preparatory commission should be appointed to select candidates for the Central Control Commission. I hope that we shall now be able to find more than enough candidates for this post among the

experienced workers in all departments, as well as among the students of our Soviet universities. It would hardly be right to exclude either of these categories beforehand. Probably preference will have to be given to a mixed composition for this institution, which should combine many qualities, combine various merits. Consequently, the task of drawing up the list of candidates will entail a considerable amount of work. For example, it would be least of all desirable for the staff of the new People's Commissariat to consist of people of one type, only of officials, say, to the exclusion of people of the propagandist type, or people whose principal trait is sociability, or the ability to penetrate into circles into which the ordinary type of official is usually unable to penetrate, etc.

* * *

I think I shall be able to express my idea best if I compare my plan with that of an academic institution. Under the guidance of their presidium, the members of the Central Control Commission should systematically examine all the papers and documents of the Political Bureau. At the same time they should properly divide their time between various jobs in investigating the routine in our offices, from the very small and private to the highest state departments. And lastly, their functions should include the study of theory, *i.e.*, the theory of organization of the work they intend to devote themselves to, and practical work under the guidance either of older comrades or of teachers in the higher institutes for the organization of labour.

I do not think, however, that they will be able to confine themselves to this sort of academic work. In addition, they will have to prepare for work which I would not hesitate to call training to catch—I will not say rogues, but something like that, and resort to special ruses to conceal their movements, their approach, etc.

If such proposals were made in West European government institutions they would rouse frightful resentment, a feeling of moral indignation, etc.; but I trust that we have not become so bureaucratic as to be capable of that. The NEP has not yet succeeded in gaining such respect as to cause any of us to be shocked at the idea that somebody may be caught. Our Soviet Republic is of such recent construction, and there are such heaps of the old lumber still lying around that it would hardly occur to anyone to be shocked at the idea that we should delve into them by means of cunning ruses, by means of investigation sometimes directed to rather remote sources, or in a roundabout way. And even if it did occur to anyone to be shocked by this, we may be sure that such a person would make himself a laughing stock.

Let us hope that our new Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will not suffer from what the French call *pruderie*, which we can call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of

our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parenthesis that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices.

When I said above that we must study and study hard in the higher institutes for the organization of labour, etc., I did not mean to imply "studying" in the schoolroom way, or that I confined myself to the idea of studying only in the schoolroom way. I hope that not a single genuine revolutionary will suspect me of refusing, in this case, to understand "studies" to mean resorting to some semi-humorous trick, cunning device, piece of trickery, or something of that sort. I know that in the staid and pompous states of Western Europe such an idea would horrify people and that not a single decent official would even entertain it. I hope, however, that we have not yet become so bureaucratic as to be affected in the same way, and that in our midst, the discussion of this idea will give rise to nothing more than amusement.

Indeed, why not combine pleasure with utility? Why not resort to some humorous, or semi-humorous trick to expose something ridiculous, something harmful, something semi-ridiculous and semi harmful, etc.?

I think our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will gain a great deal if it takes note of these ideas, and that the list of devices by which our Central Control Commission and its Collegium in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection achieved several of their most brilliant victories will be enriched by not a few exploits of our future "W P I -ites" and "C C C -ites" in places not quite mentionable in prim and respectable textbooks.

* * *

How can a Party institution be amalgamated with a Soviet institution? Is there not something improper in this suggestion?

I do not ask these questions on my own behalf, but on behalf of those I hinted at above when I said that we have bureaucrats in our Party institutions as well as in the Soviet institutions.

But why, indeed, should we not amalgamate the two if this is in the interests of our work? Do we not all see that such an amalgamation has been very beneficial in the case of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, where it was brought about at the very beginning? Have we not on the Political Bureau discussed from the Party point of view many questions, both minor and important, concerning the "moves" we should make in reply to the "moves" of foreign powers in order to forestall their, say, cunning, if we are not to use a less respectable term? Is not this flexible amalgamation of a Soviet institution with a Party institution a source of great strength in our politics? I think that what has proved its usefulness, what has been definitely adopted in our foreign politics, and has become so customary that it no longer calls forth any doubt in this field, will be at least as appropriate (I think it will be much more appropriate) for our machinery of state as a whole. The functions of

the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cover our machinery of state as a whole, and its activities should affect all and every state institution without exception: local, central, commercial, purely official, educational, archive, theatrical, etc.—in short, all without the slightest exception.

Why then should not an institution whose activities are so wide, and moreover require such extraordinary flexibility of form, be permitted to adopt this peculiar amalgamation of a Party control institution with a Soviet control institution?

I see no obstacles to this. More than that, I think that such an amalgamation is the only guarantee of success in our work. I think that all doubts on this score arise only in the dustiest corner of our government offices, and they deserve to be treated only with ridicule.

* * *

Another doubt: is it expedient to combine educational activities with official activities? I think that it is not only expedient, but necessary. Generally speaking, in spite of our revolutionary attitude towards the West European form of state, we have allowed ourselves to become infected with a number of its most harmful and ridiculous prejudices; to some extent we have been deliberately infected with them by our dear bureaucrats, who deliberately counted on being able again and again to fish in the turbid waters of these prejudices. And they fished in these turbid waters so persistently that only the blind can fail to see how extensively this fishing has been going on.

In all spheres of social, economic and political relationships we are "frightfully" revolutionary. But as regards precedence, the observation of the forms and rites of office routine, our "revolutionariness" often gives way to the mustiest routine. Here, on more than one occasion, we have witnessed the very interesting phenomenon of a great leap forward in social life being accompanied by amazing timidity whenever the slightest changes are proposed.

This is natural, for the boldest steps forward were taken in the field that has long been the object of theoretical study, which has been cultivated mainly, and even almost exclusively, theoretically. The Russian found solace in the bleak bureaucratic realities at home in unusually bold, theoretical constructions, and that is why these unusually bold, theoretical constructions assumed an unusually lopsided character among us. Theoretical audacity in general constructions went hand in hand with amazing timidity as regards certain very minor reforms in office routine. A great universal agrarian revolution was worked out with an audacity unexampled in any other country, and at the same time, the imagination was lacking to work out a tenth-rate reform in office routine; the imagination, or patience, was lacking to apply to this reform the general

propositions that produced such "brilliant" results when applied to general problems.

That is why in our social life an astonishing degree of reckless audacity goes hand in hand with timidity when it comes to very minor changes.

I think that this is what happened in all really great revolutions; for really great revolutions grow out of the contradictions between the old, between what is directed towards analysing the old, and the abstract striving for the new, which must be so new as not to contain the tiniest particle of the old.

And the more abrupt the revolution is, the longer will a number of these contradictions last.

* * *

The general feature of our present social life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have tried to raze to the ground the mediaeval institution of landlordism. In its place we have created a small and very small peasantry, which is following the lead of the proletariat because it believes in the results of its revolutionary efforts. It is not easy, however, to hold on until the Socialist revolution is victorious in the more developed countries merely with the aid of this confidence, because economic necessity, especially under the NEP keeps the productivity of labour of the small and very small peasants at an extremely low level. Moreover, the international situation, too, threw Russia back and, taken as a whole, forced the productivity of the labour of the people considerably below the pre-war level. The West European capitalist states, sometimes deliberately and sometimes unconsciously, did all that they could to throw us back, to utilize the elements of civil war in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to hold out many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall, at all events, hinder her progress towards Socialism." And from their point of view they could argue in no other way. In the end, their problem was half solved. They failed to overthrow the new system that was created by the revolution; but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the Socialists, that would have enabled it to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together, would have produced Socialism and thus vividly demonstrated to all and sundry that Socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development which has extraordinarily brilliant prospects.

The system of international relationships which has now taken shape is a system in which one of the states of Europe, *viz.*, Germany, has been

enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, a number of states, namely, the oldest states in the West, are in a position to utilize their victory to make a number of insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes—concessions which, insignificant though they are, nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of "social peace."

At the same time, precisely as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries—the East, India, China, etc.—have been completely dislodged from their groove. Their development has definitely shifted to the general European capitalist lines. The general European ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that cannot but lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism.

Thus, at the present time we are confronted with the question: Shall we be able to hold on with our small and very small peasant production, and in our present state of ruin, while the West-European capitalist countries are consummating their development towards Socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it by the gradual "maturing" of Socialism, but by the exploitation of some countries by others, by the exploitation of the first of the countries to be vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

What tactics does this situation prescribe for our country? Obviously the following: We must display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers' government and enable it to retain its leadership and authority over our small and very small peasantry. We have the advantage in that the whole world is now passing into a movement that must give rise to a world Socialist revolution. But we are labouring under the disadvantage that the imperialists have succeeded in splitting the world into two camps; and this split is made more complicated by the fact that it is extremely difficult for Germany, which is really a land of advanced, cultured, capitalist development, to rise to her feet. All the capitalist powers of what is called the West are pecking at her and preventing her from rising. On the other hand, the entire Orient, with its hundreds of millions of exploited toilers reduced to the last degree of human suffering, has been forced into such a position that its physical and material strength cannot possibly be compared with the physical, material and military strength of any of the much smaller West-European countries.

Can we save ourselves from the impending conflict with these imperialist countries? May we hope that the internal antagonisms and conflicts between the thriving imperialist countries of the West and the thriving imperialist countries of the East will give us a second respite, as was

the case when the campaign of the West-European counter-revolution in support of the Russian counter-revolution broke down owing to the antagonisms in the camp of the counter-revolutionaries in the West and the East, in the camp of the Eastern and Western exploiters, in the camp of Japan and America?

I think the reply to this question should be that the answer depends upon too many factors, and that the upshot of the struggle as a whole can be foreseen only because we know that in the long run capitalism itself is educating and training the vast majority of the population of the globe for the struggle.

In the last analysis, the upshot of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And it is precisely this majority that, during the past few years, has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest shadow of doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of Socialism is fully and absolutely assured.

But what interests us is not the inevitability of this complete victory of Socialism, but the tactics which we, the Russian Communist Party, we, the Russian Soviet government, should pursue to prevent the West-European counter-revolutionary states from crushing us. To ensure our existence until the next military conflict between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East, between the most civilized countries of the world and the Orientally backward countries, which, however, account for the majority, this majority must become civilized. We, too, lack sufficient civilization to enable us to pass straight on to Socialism, although we have the political requisites for this. To save ourselves we must adopt the following tactics, or pursue the following policy.

We must strive to build up a state in which the workers retain their leadership in relation to the peasants, in which they retain the confidence of the peasants, and, by exercising the greatest economy, remove every trace of extravagance from our social relations.

We must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must remove from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist apparatus.

Will not this be the reign of peasant narrowness?

No. If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership of the peasantry, we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible economy in the economic life of our state to use every thing we save to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to finish the construction of Volkhovstroi, etc.

In this, and this alone, lies our hope. Only when we have done this will

we, speaking figuratively, be able to change horses, to change from the peasant, muzhik horse of poverty, from the horse of economy fit for a ruined peasant country, to the horse which the proletariat is seeking and cannot but seek—the horse of large-scale machine industry, of electrification, of Volkhovstroi, etc.

That is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganized Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection so as to raise it to an exceptionally high level, to give it a head with the rights of the Central Committee, etc., etc.

And this justification is that, only by combing out our government offices to the utmost, by cutting out everything that is not absolutely essential, shall we be certain of holding on. If we do that we shall be able to hold on, not on the level of a small-peasant country, not on the level of this universal narrowness, but on the ever rising level of large-scale machine industry.

These are the lofty tasks that I dream of for our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. That is why I am planning for it the amalgamation of the most authoritative Party body with an "ordinary" People's Commissariat.

March 2, 1923

Published in *Pravda* No. 49,
March 4, 1923